

Clark, Dorothy

# Sleigh Rides Popular Winter Entertainment

T.H. Tribune-Star 12/31/67

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

The Terre Haute Journal of Feb. 7, 1851, carried the following item: "A milder winter than the present has never been known on the Wabash. The month of January was distinguished by an almost uninterrupted Indian Summer, with birds singing, flies buzzing, and even an occasional mosquito bite."

"February came in with an abundance of wind, a hard freeze, and a snow storm; yet even now the skies are bright again, and the warm sun is rapidly melting the snow."

"Meanwhile, children and young lads and lasses have been merrily enjoying the short sleighing season. The sport is, however, indifferent at the best, and the poor horses would spell it "slaying."

In the early days, after the first heavy snowfall and the winter had well set in, one could expect good sleighing all the winter, and everybody that had a horse also had a sleigh, and the young men of the town made great sleighs drawn by four horses. The sleighs, holding from 20 to 30 people and whole parties, would be made for visits to the road houses for dancing and other entertainments.



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These road houses were not the notorious road houses of more modern times, but were respectable inns and houses of entertainment situated along the major roads and highways.

The old road houses of stage coach times were the Watton Cottage four miles north of the city on the Lafayette Road; the Redford House which stood at about Eighth Street and Lafayette Ave., (across the road east and opposite the Redford place was one of Terre Haute's famous race tracks); the Four-Mile House on the National Road east of town; and the National Road House on Wabash Avenue west of Eleventh Street

on the south side. It was considered well out in the country in the early fifties.

## Carved Sleigh Popular

One notable sleigh that was built by Cone & Weatherwax, a firm of young carpenters, had a bed that must have been thirty feet long and rested on two sets of runners. The bed was made of twisted rye straw, the ropes of straw perhaps two inches in diameter. These ropes were woven in and out between upright stakes set in stringers fastened to the runners.

The front and rear of the bed must have been ten feet high and curved down to about six feet high in the center of the sides of the body of the sleigh.

On each side of the driver's seat were beautifully carved swan's heads with long curved necks. There was a door in the rear like the door of an omnibus and when this was closed no wind could reach the inmates.

The sleigh would hold 50 people and with six horses driven by Si Bullard, Terre Haute's most accomplished and noted stage coach driver, was a sight worth seeing.

## Food and Dancing Followed

When the sleighing parties reached their destination, someone's home or one of the above mentioned public houses, dancing was enjoyed and refreshments of all kinds were served.

Leg of mutton sleeves, small waists and rustling bustles swayed to the sedate strains of mazurkas, schottisches, polkas and the gay, lilting favorite Strauss waltzes. Extrapolite males, demure, handkerchief-coquetting females with long dresses, fans and bushels of bundled-up hair and curls danced the Virginia reel.

Occasionally there was a flash of ankles enjoyed by the men with their huge mustaches, sideburns, tight suits, high collars, stocks and ardent eyes. They bowed to the ladies' curtsy when intermission was called. Most prim, corseted, swathed and sedate these young ladies accepted a cup of punch from their escort under the strict eye of the chaperon.

For the younger set, Strawberry Hill was what might be called the winter playground of the boys and girls of early Terre Haute. The hill proper extended from Third to Seventh streets and north of Hulman Street. Here was good coasting on sleds and sleighs during the snowy months of winter.

Older folks heeded the old proverb of the Devonshire people which warned:

"Walk fast in snow

In frost walk slow

And still as you go

Tread on your toe

When frost and snow

Are both together

Sit by the fire and

Spare shoe leather."

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Community Affairs File



# Musical Instruments Were Important to Early Life

Clark, Dorothy

T.H. Trib-stake 10/20/68

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

From the Gay Nineties to the Roaring Twenties automatic musical instruments were an important part of life in America. By dropping a nickel in one of these automatic instruments one could buy a variety of sparkling tunes.

The Regina Music Box Company of Rahway, New Jersey, was the most famous and most prolific American maker of music boxes. The Regina boxes use a perforated steel disc with raised projections on one side. These projections turn a "star wheel" which, in turn, plucks a tooth in the large musical comb.

Made in two size discs, the Regina 21 inch was usually a beautiful table model of the type which used to grace Grandmother's parlor. This is the type so admired by Museum visitors here.



DOROTHY J. CLARK

The 27 inch disc type could play twelve different discs in rotation but without selection. It was provided with a coin slot and was intended for use in an ice cream

parlor, drug store, or other public amusement place.

Popular tunes to be heard on the Regina range from "Last Rose of Summer" to the "Washington Post March," from "Lost Chord" to "Columbia, Gem of the Ocean."

Before the coming of the jukebox, every honky-tonk and speakeasy in America had a coin piano, or nickelodeon as most collectors know them today. Most famous of these instruments were the J. P. Seeburg Piano Co., the Marquette Piano Co., and the Operators Piano Co., all located in the town which

made honky-tonks and speakeasies famous—Chicago, Ill.

"Yes, Sir, That's My Baby," "Waiting for the Robert E. Lee," these and many other tunes were played again and again as an endless stream of nickels cascaded down the coin chute in the old nickelodeons on the pier at Atlantic City, in an Oregon lumber camp, in a New Orleans cafe, or in a roadhouse near Peoria, Ill., all did their part to make life during the care-free Roaring Twenties a little bit more enjoyable.

The Seeburg company formed in 1907 was one of the leaders in the automatic music field. The firm discontinued making the large orchestrions in 1927 and went on to be a leader in the field of juke boxes, stereo systems, etc.

One of the largest Seeburg orchestrions had 68 pipes representing several different orchestra instruments, bass drum and snare drum, tympani, castanets, cymbal and triangle. It is a fascinating instrument to hear when everything plays at once (or nearly all at once!)

The cases of the Marquette instruments were lined with bird's eye maple and mahogany and decorated with fine art glass. One of their orchestrions made in 1920 had two large banks of violin and flute pipes plus tiny piccolos for solo effects rather than trapwork.

The orchestrion known as the Empress Electric could play elaborate solo effects on a melodious set of Deagan orchestra bells. With the addition of a piano, mandolin, bass drum, snare drum, wood block, triangle and cymbal the overall effect was that of a snappy little musical combo!

## No Home Complete

From about 1900 to 1930 no home was complete without a player piano in the living room. These ranged from inexpensive player pianos with foot-pumped pedals which sold for a few hundred dollars to magnificent reproducing pianos which sold for much more and which re-enacted the original artist's performance down to his most delicate shadings and nuances.

The addition of a rinky-tink mandolin bar to the parlor player piano was a great attraction, and many of my readers can probably remember

spending hours of leisure time pumping and singing away on the old player piano.

Of all the companies engaged in the field of mechanical music no wider variety of instruments was made than the marvelous products of the Rudolph Wurlitzer company.

The Wurlitzer orchestrion catalogue featured one machine whose musical innards consisted of a piano, mandolin bar, violin pipes, flute pipes, a xylophone, a set of charming orchestra bells, bass drum, snare drum and triangle.

The Wurlitzer automatic harp was a most wonderful instrument. Close your eyes and you'll almost see the gaily painted galloping horses and the ringing laughter of children on a merry-go-round when you hear again the Wurlitzer band organ.

The Bijou Orchestrion, as the favorite theatre name implies, once attracted people to the movie house to see the latest escapade of Charlie Chaplin or the latest installment of "The Perils of Pauline."

The most wonderful and most elaborate mechanical musical instruments ever made were the gigantic orchestrions produced in Germany during the early 20th century. Weighing tons and costing a small fortune they took the place of an entire human orchestra in beer halls, restaurants and other places.

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# Reed Organ Forerunner Of Mechanical Music

Community Affairs File

By DOROTHY J. CLARK Ts JUN 18 1972

How many of my readers can remember the typical Victorian parlor of the average American home of the turn of the century? With every gew-gaw and tassel in place and thoroughly cleaned of fly-ash from the ever-present soft coal-fired, pot-bellied stove (complete with mica peepholes) it's no wonder Grandma would permit occupancy only on Sunday afternoons. The reed organ, replete with unbelievable ornamentation, was standard equipment. From this atmosphere stemmed the rich tradition of automatic music in the three decades to follow.

In a day when scientific miracles are commonplace, it's difficult to realize that only yesterday television hadn't been dreamed of, the radio didn't exist nor did the phonograph, electricity was pretty much of a novelty and families were largely on their own to provide entertainment for themselves, particularly in rural America, which then constituted the largest portion of the population.

The music of the average family was restricted to what its members could make themselves, or if their near-by town was truly culturally oriented, what they could hear every Sunday evening in the summer at the concert of the local town band playing in the park or court house square. Singing they got at church and school.

As the wealth of the nation and of individuals increased, more money and time became available to people to satisfy their musical wants, but then, as today, there was one great big catch to learning how to play a musical instrument. Most persons lacked the patience, talent and motivation to devote time and energy to learning how to play the piano or some other instrument.

Is it any wonder, then, that clever inventors came up with musical instruments that could be played merely by turning a crank, pushing some pedals,

winding a spring, or later, dropping a coin or pushing a button?

The reed organ was the first home instrument of substantial size to undergo mechanization. Forty-four note paper music rolls were devised.

To sit down and work the pedals making the strains of "Nearer, My God, to Thee" ring forth from the beautifully ornate circassian walnut or quarter-sawn oak cabinet was surely the ultimate in God's plan!

It wasn't long before the "piano-player" device was introduced. A bulky contrivance attached to the regular old piano was all the rage from 1900 to 1905. For about \$250 the home owner could have this installed and once again his big upright piano in which he had invested so much money for the kid's music lessons would fill the house with the latest hit tunes (and hymns on Sunday, of course).



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When the technicians figured out how to "miniaturize" the clumsy Pianola and squeeze its contents into the confines of the case of an ordinary piano, the "piano-player" became extinct by 1910, and the "player piano" was a reality.

The early music rolls played 65 notes of the normal 88-note piano scale. The chance to be able to pedal through such hits as "Hello, Central, Give Me Heaven" and the "Maple Leaf Rag" made an impact on the

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American Home that is difficult for us to appreciate over half a century later.

Of course not every home had a player piano. The \$700 to \$1,000 that these pianos cost in those days was a very large sum of money, and ownership was very much a prestige proposition, a way to "keep up with the Joneses."

From baby-sitting to entertaining polar explorers, to amusing sailors and marines, player pianos were everywhere. They were advertised to withstand all climates, conditions, and simple enough for small children to operate. Even undertaking establishments had paper-roll operated small pipe organs during this period.

The rise and fall of the player piano happened within a thirty year period. Starting in 1900, sales moved slowly but increased rapidly during World War I, then rapidly plummeted to nothing in

1930. The fast decline is generally attributed to the increase in popularity of the radio and the phonograph.

Some two and a half million player pianos of all types were built in the United States. Player rolls were of two types: "Word rolls" had the words to the music printed on the paper, so that everyone could sing right along with the music. These sold for about half a dollar. Instrumental rolls were considerably cheaper.

It's interesting to note that the peak interest period for the player piano was during 1917-1918 and many collectors today specialize in the music of that period.

## 20's Bring Phonograph

It was during the early 1920's that the phonograph really started to amount to something, and, of course, radio was just being introduced. As is always the case, the public quickly changed its allegiance to the newer medium of home entertainment. By 1930 the player industry was dead.

In 1956 the Hardman & Black Co. of New York City decided to "try" the market with a

new player piano. Much to everyone's surprise, sales were quite good, and since that time a number of other firms have jumped back into business. Perhaps seven or eight thousand player pianos are being built yearly in the U.S. Technically, this piano is the same, but its modern decor cabinet better suits the homes of today.

History is not clear on where credit should go as to basic invention of the player piano. John McTammany, a veteran of the Civil War, went to his Canton, Ohio grave proclaiming that the honor was rightfully his (he even has that fact carved on his tombstone!) and that others had merely stolen his ideas. Whether his claims were justified or not will never be known.

The first 30 years of the Twentieth Century were a never-to-be-forgotten era, and as one examines the activities of those days, it's pretty difficult not to think that perhaps there was merit in life being less complicated and moving at a slower pace than it does today. As to the tune of the

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perforated music roll.

Note: More on this subject

can be found at the Historical Museum in the library files

... "Keys To a Musical Past" by Noehl. (The Vestal Press).



# Baseball Was a Favorite Among Sports Fans in 1867

By DOROTHY J. CLARK Ts DEC 24 1972

According to an 1867 publication, "Our Young Folks," loaned to me by local resident Mark A. Majors, baseball was the most played game in this country. Cricket came next in favor of those which are played with a ball. Tennis, fives, rackets, trap-ball, etc., were but little known a century ago.

The popularity of baseball was immense, considering it was of recent growth (after the Civil War). The regular clubs were numbered by thousands, extending from coast to coast, and their great number was not more remarkable than the enormous crowds of people who attended the great matches near the large cities as spectators.

When two crack clubs played at Brooklyn, or on the Elysian Fields at Hoboken, "the multitude was so great that it was well into the night before the ferry-boats brought them all back to the home-hive, New York."

"This game of baseball has an extraordinary fascination for the players and lookers-on, mainly because of the rapidity of the action. It goes right along without pause, after it is once begun. It is all movement and dash—hurry, hurry, hurrah! This suits Americans, whether young or old; whatever else we may be, we are not a deliberate people."

Cricket, according to the 1867 reporter's thoughts, was a deal more formal, and

some thought it "slow." Unless the play was really fine, there was a sort of dawdling at it which provoked the impatient spectator.



DOROTHY J.  
CLARK

The game out of which baseball grew was called Rounders, and at one time was much played in England. The rules of Rounders were few and simple and all the apparatus required was a bat and a ball. The bat was simply a round club, tapering up towards the hands; the ball was hard, covered with a white sheep-skin, not with red leather, as a cricket ball which was much harder and heavier.

The ground was a square, with four bases ninety feet apart. The pitcher's mound or "feeder's place" as it was called then, was 45 feet from the "striker" or batter.

Cricket required two bats, one ball, and two wickets. The bats were usually made of willow, a light but tough wood. The ball was covered with Russian leather, sewed on in two even halves. Each wicket was composed of three stumps and two balls. The distance between wickets was 22 feet for men, lesser for boys. There were eleven players on each side.

## Football Interest Grew

In winter and spring when the ground was not suitable for cricket or baseball, and the ice was not suitable for skating, football was the favorite sport.

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In 1867 the football was merely a large ball, six or eight inches in diameter, a hollow ball made of leather, or sometimes hide with the hair on. It was made in sections, sewed together, except one which was wider than the others, and across which the edges of the two between which it was placed were laced with a leather thong. It was the same as the tongue over which you lace your boot on your instep. This was for the purpose of putting in a bladder of the proper size, when blown up, to keep the ball stretched. After the bladder was put in it was blown up until the ball was filled. Then the neck of the bladder outside was tied, and forced into the ball, and then the lacing was drawn tight. This gave strength without much weight. Later footballs were made of gutta-percha.

When football was first played in England there was no limit on the number of players. Sometimes all able-bodied males of two villages would play against each other. It was a very rough, tough game ending in bloody riots and long and bitter feuds.

Nowadays we think of hockey as a fast and furious game played on ice, but in 1867 the game was played on a large flat field. The object of this game was to drive home, across the goal line, a piece of hardwood about two inches long and an inch in diameter. This piece of wood was called the "nun." Each player had a hockey stick which was straight from the hand-end down to within about three inches of the striking-end. There it could either curve, run into a knob, or make a sort of angle. The thickness and length depended on the size of the player.

The illustrated magazine, "Our Young Folks" was a monthly publication mailed to subscribers both boys and

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girls. It was edited by  
Trowbridge, Hamilton and  
Larcom, and printed in 1867 in  
Boston. The copies were  
bound by the year in leather  
and kept for future reference.  
Each issue contained games,  
puzzles, contests, inspirational  
stories, jokes and continued  
stories of the trials and  
tribulations of early settlers in  
New England.

There was included in this  
book an interesting account of  
how ice was cut from rivers  
and ponds in Civil War times.  
But that's for next week . . .



# Bare-Knuckle Prizefight of John L. Sullivan Recalled

Ts JUL 22 1973 By DOROTHY J. CLARK

Prizefighters were regarded as romantic heroes in the 1850s, probably because they were outlaws. The spectators were outlaws, too. There was a happy atmosphere of riot and revolution, of Shays' Rebellion and the Whiskey Insurrection, about the great encounters.

Honors were showered on them. Their portraits were painted, engraved, daguerreotyped and dramatized in the theater. Their biographies appeared in the sporting press. They were appointed to political sinecures, and frequently married wealthy and famous women of the time.

Prizefighting was still felonious and romantic in 1889. Corbett and Choynski were relentlessly pursued by posses before they were finally allowed to fight it out. Corbett, who was then 23, was later known as "Gentleman Jim" and "Pompador Jim," but in 1889 he was called "The Professor," because he held the chair of boxing at the Olympic Club. He was still an amateur in 1889, although he could make nearly any professional look ridiculous.

Eighty-four years ago this month Terre Haute and most of the nation were still talking about a great bare-knuckle prize fight. It was between John L. Sullivan and Jake Kilrain for the heavyweight title of the world.

Those were the days when prize fights were illegal and Sullivan and Kilrain both faced arrest.

It had been booked for some place in New Orleans, on one of the river islands.

But state authorities ruled out the fight at the last moment. It was shifted to Richburg, Miss., the New York promoters hiring a special train of passenger cars, box cars, and flat cars to transport the fighters and the spectators.



Dorothy Clark

ed to a Queen and Crescent train. Sullivan badges were sold at the Cincinnati depot, the champ's face printed in white ribbon adorning many a manly breast.

The next day Kilrain arrived at Cincinnati from Baltimore. He, too, traveled to the fight scene in a special car. "Aida." He denounced he had been "lushing beer."

Kilrain was a bit nervous for a detective was on the train and there were reports Kilrain might be arrested as the train went through Mississippi. There the governor had offered a reward for his arrest.

Because of his late arrival, New Orleans seethed with rumors that Kilrain had "flunked and would not meet Sullivan." Many of the fans wagered money that Kilrain was scared of Sullivan, that he was in bad condition and would not show. But Kilrain did show and was greeted by

After his health failed him, John L. became an advocate of temperance. He lectured on the evils of drink and preached abstinence. The local newspapers tell of the great interest that prevailed in the country over the Sullivan-Kilrain battle. There was heavy betting with John L. a slight favorite.

Sullivan traveled to New Orleans from Cincinnati in a "boudoir car, named Lucia di Lammermore." It was attached

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5,000 "sports" at the New Orleans depot amid great excitement.

The local newspapers carried the story of the fight by rounds. Here was the report on the last two rounds:

"74th round — Kilrain lead, landing lightly on Sullivan, but Kilrain finally went down from a slight blow.

"75th round — Kilrain went down with a slight blow to the jaw and was cautioned by the referee."

With the 76th coming up, the referee asked Sullivan if he would give a present to Kilrain if he gave up the sponge and Sullivan said: "Of course I will." Kilrain's manager then tossed in the sponge.

Although the fight had been fought without gloves, Sullivan's only mark was a bruise under one eye. Kilrain's body was badly battered.

It was the last bare-knuckle fight, Sullivan saying he would fight no more that way.

The battle demonstrated again that history is always kind to the winner. John L. Sullivan has retained his legend until this day. But

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# Hot-Air Balloonists Were Popular at Early Fairs

TS JAN 6 1974 By DOROTHY J. CLARK

One would suppose that Dr. John Jeffries, the early aeronaut who first crossed the British Channel, was an Englishman, but he was an American by birth. A physician and scientist, Jeffries was born in 1744, graduated with honors from Harvard in 1763. He began the practise of medicine in 1766, but went to England in 1768 to study further. After receiving a medical degree from the University of Aberdeen in 1769 he returned to Boston.

During the Revolutionary War he was a Loyalist and became Surgeon-Major in the British Army. After the war he was a very successful physician in London until his return to Boston in 1789.

During his residence in England he became interested in aerial flight in hot-air balloons and made the first crossing in a balloon from Dover, England to the coast of France, an endeavor that was believed impossible at that time—January 7, 1785. He was accompanied by the famous French balloonist, J. Pierre Blanchard.

One hundred years later balloon ascensions were still very popular all over the United States. Here in the Wabash Valley every celebration including the county fairs advertised the hot air balloonist, the high point of the day's entertainment.

A famous aeronaut who appeared in this area many times was Prof. Luther Dennis who died in Franklin, Ind., about thirty years ago. In 1889 he appeared in Sullivan, Ind. The large canvas balloon used to be inflated in the northeast corner of the court house park and on the corner, then vacant, where the Lyric Theater was built.

A long furnace was dug in the ground and this was covered with old tin and dirt. A large flue or pipe was placed at the end. The gas or hot air was created in the long furnace by filling it with pine boxes and other kindling, the covering with kerosene. After collapsible canvas balloon was placed over the flue, the fire was lighted and the filling process was carried out under the directions of the aeronaut and his assistants.

The inflated balloon was held down by ropes, and the parachute fastened to the end of the balloon had a trapeze suspended at the end of the canvas parachute.



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When the word came to release the balloon, the skilled flyer took his seat on the rod of the trapeze as the balloon left the ground. When the balloon had soared to sufficient height in the judgement of the aeronaut, the rope holding the parachute to the balloon was released or cut, then the crowd got a thrill by the fall of the parachute and its passenger several feet before it opened, carrying the flyer safely to the ground. A weight on the top of the balloon after the parachute was cut caused the balloon to reverse and the air to rapidly leave, then the collapsed balloon would fall like a rag. The flyer usually landed at the edge of town, with the balloon falling nearby.

Other balloon enthusiasts in the Sullivan area were Dave Kendrick, Lynn Taylor, Vern "Dock" Ross and a fellow named Hackett, said to have been a student of Prof. Dennis. Taylor made himself a balloon out of old awnings and canvas, and after rigging it, went to the Giles pasture just northwest of town and with the help of the other amateur balloonists made a furnace and inflated his balloon. In attempting the ascension, the balloon failed to rise high enough for a parachute jump by the flyer who was bruised considerably when he landed on top of a large stock barn in the pasture.

Dock Ross recalled an ascension at Oaktown when his job was to go inside the balloon as it was being filled with hot air to watch for sparks that might set fire to the canvas. After this experience Dock was nearly suffocated, blacked up and his eyes full of soot.

In recalling other aerial events in the Wabash Valley, the near tragedy at Merom was remembered. Many years ago some event held on the bluffs at Merom offered the unusual attraction of a woman suspended by her hair, riding a cable suspended from the bluff to the Illinois side of the Wabash river. It seems the cable was not stretched tight enough and in the descent on the pulley attached to a cable, the weight of her body pulled so strongly on the rope that she landed in the river instead of on the Illinois bank. She was rescued and returned to safety by men in a skiff.

The first aeroplane flight ever attempted in Sullivan county was performed in front of a large crowd at Coffman's park before 1904. The machine was only able to rise some twenty feet in the air. The "aviator" managed to clear a high board fence on the south side of the park and the flyer and his plane landed on a shed just outside the park.

Earlier a stunt flyer at a chautauqua held at Merom Bluff managed to gain sufficient momentum in his aeroplane to get airborne and sustain flight across the Wabash and land on the Illinois side not far from the river.

During the years 1900 to 1905 there were annual street fairs held on the public square in Sullivan. The star attraction of each six-day fair was the diving act of Marvelous Marsh. This act was performed daily and was most thrilling. A high runway was erected near the center of the north side of the public square, possibly 100-feet high. Marsh would dash down this steep incline on a bicycle and, under great velocity, would leave the cycle near the end of the incline. The wheel would drop into a canvas spread to receive it, and Marsh would then sail up through the air like a bird and when squarely over a tank of water, his body would turn and he would dive feet first into this tank of water. Marsh appeared here for some four years and was later killed while staging his act.

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# When Vaudeville Season Community Affairs File Opened Here in 1909

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

The official opening of the theatrical season in Terre Haute which took place on Labor Day, 1909, "promised new and better class of shows at the local play houses." Terre Haute theatergoers were promised the opportunity of enjoying vaudeville and the newly remodeled Varieties and Lyric theaters.

Sixty-five years ago there were six theaters in town. There was the Air Dome Theatre, located at 325 Ohio, and operated by Samuel M. Young. He also ran the Stag Hotel, at the northeast corner of Second and Wabash, and resided at 2411 North Ninth Street.

The Coliseum Theater, located at 33-37 North 8th Street, was operated by Barnes-Peabody, proprietors.

The Grand Opera House, 29 North 7th, was managed by Theodore W. Barhydt Jr. Harrington's Air Dome Theater, at the southeast corner of Fifth and Cherry, was operated by Ernest A. Harrington, who resided at the New National Hotel.

The Lyric Theater Company owned both the Lyric Theater, 720-722 Wabash, and the Varieties, southwest corner of Eighth and Wabash. This company was headed by T. W. Barhydt Jr., president; C. J. Allardt, vice president; John P. Hoeffler, secretary-treasurer.

In 1909 extensive alterations and improvements had just been made at the Varieties, making it one of the most attractive,

comfortable theaters in the middle west. The large room formerly used as a penny arcade was converted into a lobby, handsomely decorated and painted. Three



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Doors were cut through into the theater, making the entrance into the middle of the house instead of at one corner. The interior of the theater had been cleaned and painted. The room in the corner of the building, formerly used as a lobby, was fitted up as an office. A new hardwood maple stage had also been installed which was expected to benefit the dancing acts.

The Lyric had also been given a going over from top to bottom, inside and out, with paint and varnish. The inside had been handsomely redecorated and the stage furnished with new scenery sets.

Mr. Jack Hoeffler, general manager of the two theaters, had just returned from New York, where he had spent the summer with his family. While there he had arranged with Reith and Proctor and the Orpheum managers for a

big list of the best eastern acts. He then went to Chicago where he signed up the best of the western vaudeville acts, assuring Terre Haute vaudeville lovers a host of new faces back of the footlights.

The opening bill at the Varieties was headed by The Nine Memphis Students, Trainor and Dale, a comedy singing and dancing team, the DeGar Sisters, a Parisian novelty dancing act, and the Gartelle Brothers, novelty acrobatic and roller skating artists.

The Lyric opening bill contained: DeWolf's Rainbow and

Ponyboy Girls, Casad, Vernon and Walters, a comedy and novelty musical act, Dick O'Neal, comedy monologue and songs, and Klint Brothers, comedy jugglers.

At the Grand Opera House on opening night, the audience would see "The Eye Witness," a melodrama, "abounding in sensational scenes and mechanical effects." Four of the most effective scenic effects that had ever been invented were included in this play. They included a realistic fire scene, a novel illusionary scene showing an attempted drowning and rescue, the great jack knife bridge — a ponderous piece of machinery, weighing many tons and operated by electricity — and while this bridge was in the act of opening, a full-sized, 40-horsepower automobile leaped across the chasm, from one point to the other, flying through space for fully twenty feet.

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This show came in on the Big Four and required five baggage wagons to carry the scenery to the opera house. Terre Haute was the only one night stand for this company, and from here it traveled to Toledo, Ohio.

Willard Holcomb's stage version of the famous novel "St. Elmo" was the next presentation at the Grand Opera House for three performances.

The Sherman Stock company opened at Young's Garden Air Dome for two weeks. It was filled to capacity for every performance. A cowboy play, "The Last Round Up" played there next. Each Thursday was amateur night, and matinees were scheduled on Saturday afternoons. Dark wings and gables had been added to the Garden equipment, a big improvement in making the afternoon performances equal to the night, by making the stage dark.

A genuine burlesque show was the offering at the Coliseum which offered "Harry Montague's newly equipped and thoroughly reorganized Fashion Plates." This high class troupe of comedians and pretty girls had been seen in every city in the United States. Lew Dunbar, comedian from San Francisco, made his first appearance in Terre Haute. Other entertainers in the show were: Harry Philips, Lou Morgan, Lillian Keeley, one of the handsomest and talented burlesquers on the stage, and Caroline Duncan. In addition there were "20 human blossoms in a beauty chorus" and the celebrated DeMuths, whirlwind dancers.

Motion pictures and illustrated songs were on the bill at the Albert Airdome. Admission was ten cents, children five cents, and the performances were continuous from 7:30 until 11 a.m. Vaudeville was also shown here.

The First Regiment Band could be enjoyed afternoon and evening at the Collett Park Band Concert on Sundays.

Those who wanted to do their own dancing, not watch the professionals, could attend W. L. Schomer's School of Dancing in Rooms 3 and 6, Whitcomb-Allen Building, 1218½ Wabash Avenue. He taught all the latest popular round, fancy and buck and wing dances. He had four years' experience in vaudeville, according to his newspaper advertisements. Reference or introduction was required for pupils at the morning, afternoon and evening classes.

There was no lack of entertainment in Terre Haute 65 years ago!



*Clark, Dorothy*

## Early Reporter Explored River's Summer Camps

Community Affairs File

TS JUL 17 1977



Nearly seventy years ago an enterprising TRIBUNE reporter elected to explore the summer camps along the Wabash river bank north of Terre Haute during a sweltering July heat wave.

Some of the camps were quite pretentious, while others were only small tents rigged up to keep out the rain.

Just a short distance above the first bend in the river was the first camp, a tent erected on the west bank where the campers were enjoying life to the fullest.

Other fishing camps were dotted at intervals along both banks as the reporter traveled farther north.

The occupants spent their time in rowing on the river and in "tempting the appetites of the fish with which the stream abounds."

The tents of mussel diggers were also to be found — very temporary camps moving whenever mussels were found in another location.

Most interesting were the camps of local people who stayed a week or more.

Many were business men who commuted back and forth to their jobs in motor boats.

Among these were members of the Motor Boat Club park, the Power Boat Club house, and the camp of James Misner.

The first was located on the west bank of the river about three-quarters of a mile above Fort Harrison. The tents of the campers were located in "a shady little dell."

Three families were in residence, and others planned to arrive later.

Each family had a large private tent with one or more rooms. There was also a mess tent where all cooking was done, and the women could bake.

All the campers ate together at long tables in the dining tent. Fish came from the river, and other necessary food was brought up from the city daily and kept in an ice box.

Activities included reading, boating, reclining in hammocks or lawn swings and swimming.

A wharf was being built, and the young people were agitating for tennis courts and a baseball diamond. A dancing pavillion was planned also.

In front of the camp, on the bluff above the water, stood the camp mascot — a statue of the Indian Tecumseh, along with an American flag.

About one-fourth of a mile above this camp and on the opposite side of the river was the camp of James Misner and party.

The three-roomed tent contained one room for ladies, one for men and the third for a sitting room.

The kitchen was in the rear with a gasoline stove on a bench. All utensils hung from the nearby trees.

On the same side of the river, but below Fort Harrison about one-half mile, was the new home of the Power Boat Club on a high bluff overlooking the river.

Members had leased a tract of land with 400 feet of river frontage and 150 feet deep.

Plenty of shade trees, rustic fencing and white-washed tree trunks presented a "very pretty spectacle," according to the reporter.

Their home was intended to be a permanent one and was built on concrete posts six feet high above the ground in case of high water.

The house had two rooms with several beds in one room and easy chairs in the other. Members took turns cooking.

(over)

Community Affairs File

Vigo County Public Library

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This camp was only a short walk directly west of Collett Park.

Members of the Wabash Power Boat Club were listed as H. Whistle, C. Bruce, C. Reynolds, C. Mosteller, Joe Kennedy, James Kennedy, C. Cantwell, James Worry, G. Ohm, G. Hasmer and E. Gosnell.

In more recent times, in the 1930s, my husband's father and his neighbor built a cabin north of Maple Avenue on the east bank of the river, just north of a deserted dance pavillion known as the White Swan.

The cabin was built on stilts and contained only one large room.

It was constructed of sheets of corrugated metal salvaged from the old grain elevator north of 19th and Maple which burned in the fall of 1930.

In those days the river was completely safe for swimming, and even bass were to be caught occasionally by lucky fishermen.

My husband and his schoolboy friends constructed a diving raft from discarded five-gallon oil tins from Sam Teel's popcorn stand in Twelve Points.

All the holes in the cans had to be re-soldered.

In late summer one could wade across the Wabash at this point as it was never more than waist deep.

Each spring, however, came the high water and they would lose the rowboat.

But, not to worry, they would catch another one as it came downriver which someone else had lost. In the course of three or four years, they had a different rowboat each season on the river.

The land belonged to Walter Phillips, long known as the "Daddy of 12 Points," and a family friend. His farm acreage along the river was extensive.

In the near vicinity was a "speakeasy" called the "Cracker Box". It was located directly west of Florida Avenue on the river bank.

Directly across the river from the Clark cabin was the summer camp provided by I. N. Oakley for all his employees.

In those Depression days, no one had a lot of money, but they managed to have a lot of fun.

The territory was a wonderful place for active boys to roam, swim in the gravel pit, dive off the old tippie, canoe, swim and fish in those crazy, lazy days of summer.



## Historically Speaking

## Public bath house opened in 1865

DOROTHY J. CLARK  
Tribune-Star Writer

Probably the first public bath house in Terre Haute was the one at the Terre Haute House. It was in 1865 that Chauncey Rose ordered another water well to be driven to supply his hotel at the northeast corner of Seventh and Wabash. Instead of water, the drillers struck oil. Who was it said that Chauncey Rose had the Midas touch?

Later he struck artesian water, and in order to use this profitably, he erected a frame bath house near the east end of the hotel. It was used for several years until he decided the fumes of the sulphur water tarnished the silverware and the well was plugged.

When Reinhard Zimmerman, valet and bodyguard of Chauncey Rose, first came to Terre Haute from Germany, he lived just north of Eighth and Chestnut streets. The linden trees he brought with him were planted there. His young nephew, George S. Zimmerman, grandfather of local TV's weatherman Dave Kirk, had accompanied him. Because of his rosy cheeks which made him look the very picture of health, he was employed by Rose to stand out in front of the bath house and drink the mineral water whenever customers arrived.

As he could only speak German, not a word of English, young George was a walking advertisement to show the dubious that if they would also drink the water, how healthy and rosy-cheeked they might become.

Some years later another oil well was bored at the foot of Walnut Street near the river. Instead of oil the drillers got the same kind of mineral water found at the Terre Haute House. This well was located about 200 feet south of Walnut Street and 100 feet west of Water Street. It was 2,000 feet deep, and the water was 85 degrees.

One source states that this Magnetic Mineral Springs Bath House was established in 1871. Another source gives the date as 1882 when the bath house and swimming pool were built at this location. It was first operated by Ira Delano, then passed through the hands of several people before being destroyed by fire when it was owned by George Faris.

In 1889 another oil well was bored at 10½ and Chestnut streets.

At 1,800 feet the same artesian water with a high sulphur content was found. On March 10, 1890, David Bronson opened one of the most attractive and luxurious bathing establishments to be found anywhere. Located opposite the first Union Depot, it was known as the Exchange Artesian Bath House, a large two-story brick structure erected for the purpose and containing 40 bathing rooms.

The interior was finished in Georgian pine and no expense was spared. The rooms were all high-

ceilinged, well-ventilated and supplied with indurated fibre tubs. Besides the regular baths, several rooms had been fitted with vapor baths.

In the basement of the building were the Turkish and Russian baths. Apartments were provided for the ladies under the supervision of Mrs. Bronson. In addition there were parlors and sitting rooms for both ladies and gentlemen.

Remarkable curative effects were claimed for this artesian water. It was advertised to cure chronic, inflammatory and muscular rheumatism eczema, salt rheum, scrofula, any eruption of the skin, blood poisoning from any cause, paralysis, cancer, catarrh, dyspepsia and stomach troubles when taken internally and used in connection with bathing.

The bath house was open every day year round, and prices for baths were most reasonable. Not even Hot Springs, Arkansas, was considered better and prices were reasonable. Hot or cold artesian baths cost 25 cents, vapor baths were 35 cents, and Turkish and Russian baths were one dollar. Open from 5 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. daily and until 11:30 p.m. on Saturday, all patrons could have one or two gallons of the water free for drinking by calling at the bath house.

Later the bathhouse was operated by his sons, Ross and Harry Bronson, until 1921 when the building burned, a common fate of so many bath houses. The Bronson brothers had many and varied careers.

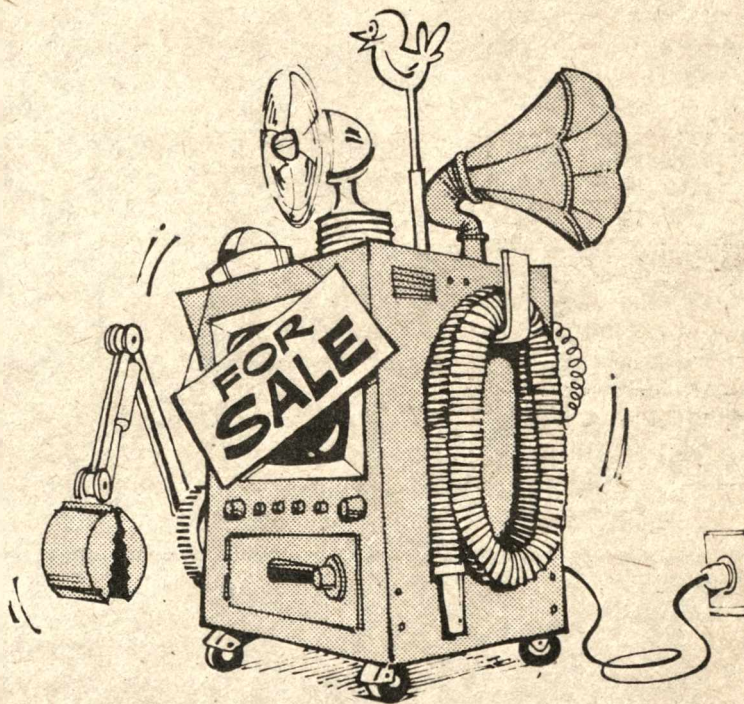
Harry O. Bronson was born in Terre Haute the same year of the Great Chicago Fire. He attended Notre Dame and Rose Polytechnic Institute for a time. He served four

years as a deputy under Judge Jump in the revenue office. Next he was associated with his brother in manufacturing working men's garments at 10th and Chestnut. A fire destroyed the factory, and they ran the bath house and roller skating rink on 10th Street until the Coliseum was built.

Daniel Ross Bronson was born in Terre Haute in 1871. He spent four years at Notre Dame before graduating in 1892 from the University of Michigan. He returned to Terre

Haute and practiced law, serving as chief deputy when David Watson was elected county clerk in 1894. Three years later he resigned to go into manufacturing with his brother.

The world turns, and now the hot tub is very "in" again all over the world. In spite of all efforts to cap off and plug the artesian water flow in Fairbanks Park, the water manages to get to the top of the ground and stink up the area of Dresser Drive. Should we have a bath house again?

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# BETWEEN THE LINES

## THE STORY BEHIND THE STORIES YOU READ ABOUT CELEBRITIES

By Josie



**Q.** *I keep seeing pictures of Daryl Hall and his girlfriend Sandy Allen. Are they still just living together or have they gotten married by now? J. Carven, Kerrville, Tex.*

**A.** Still living together: Allen thinks it's quaint to be nearly 30 and still call one's own true love boyfriend, not husband, and Hall doesn't want to be bothered. Interesting note is Hall and Oates's recent hit song "Kiss on My List" which Hall co-wrote with Sandy Allen's sister. "The song is about 'I love you, but

you're only one on my list. There are others,' " says Hall. "It's a love song for people who have alternate relationships. I think people have become independent, especially women, in the past 10 years. They're not making demands of 'love me forever.' People will always want to have intense relationships, but they don't need to be a pair." And, as for marriage, he adds: "I was married for two years in the early '70s. It's a symbolic act that ties you to someone else and I don't want to be tied to anybody else. Except me." Get that, Sandy?

**Q.** *I saw Angie Dickinson on a talk show recently and she said she really didn't like being in parades. Other people good-naturedly make fools of themselves in those parades, what does she have against them? Roseann C., Pottstown, Pa.*

**A.** It all goes back to 1979 when Angie was taken for ride, literally, in the annual Hollywood Christmas parade. It seems she was all decked out in an open, horse-drawn carriage waiting to take her place in the procession, but her careless driver had fallen behind in the line. So in his attempt to catch up with the parade, he took various side streets, short cuts, dead end streets, etc., and wound up buried deep in the reaches of L.A. canyon country with one hysterical passenger on his hands. She was eventually rescued, however, by the L.A. Police Department who had put out a citywide APB ("all points bulletin") and finally caught up with the wayward driver.



**Q.** *I just heard that Elvis Costello's new album was a country album. Punk gone country? What? Jeff. S., Mansfield, Ohio*

**A.** If George Burns can make a country album, why not Elvis Costello? Actually, Costello had been planning this one for a long time. Originally, his producer was to have been Nick Lowe, British rocker and sometime producer, but since Lowe married Elvis' old girlfriend, Carlene Carter, things have been a little tense. So Elvis turned to veteran Nashville producer Billy Sherrill, who had some time on his hands since Tammy Wynette had dumped him after 15 years collaboration. But first Costello had to wait until Sherrill fulfilled another commitment: producing Carlene's stepfather, Johnny Cash's, album "The Baron," a concept album that some say is a rip-off of Kenny Rogers' "The Gambler." And we thought country music was simple...

**Q.** *I always see these girls at ballgames trying to get the players' attention. Do their efforts work? J. Henricks, Montecito, Calif.*

**A.** Very often. But what's even more interesting is when a player spots a spectator and goes after her. Successful case in point is new Yankee Dave Collins who, while with the Cincinnati Reds, looked up one day and saw a sensational blonde in one of the boxes at Riverfront Stadium. The next day, he checked into the seat location (he'd memorized it while flagging fly balls — no dummy, this guy) and found it to be a season ticket, registered in a woman's name. He got her office number from the Reds's office, called, found out it was the blonde's mother, got the daughter's number and started calling her. But the blonde in question, now Mrs. Collins, was hardly thrilled by his initiative; she told him never to call her again. But he did, again and again, until he got a date for dinner. And there she was, posing proudly as he signed his million dollar New York contract.

**Q.** *I saw a repeat of the "Tomorrow Show" a little while ago with Peter Allen announcing that he was going to do a Broadway show with Bob Fosse. Is he? N. Simmons, Burlington, N.J.*

**A.** There's a bit of confusion on this one. Months back, Fosse and Allen did talk about it, but nothing happened. Fosse also announced plans to do a musical about Atlantic City, but nothing happened with that either. Then he got involved with "Star 80," the film he's making about Dorothy Stratten, the murdered Playboy Playmate. So it seems to leave Fosse little time to develop the show, at least according to Fosse's agents. They think Allen is just mentioning it to puff up his career at the moment.

*With Oscar fever beginning to swell, we felt it was time to institute a new free-running feature, Josie's Thumbs-up Awards for commendable behavior when and wherever we find it. Our first are in the categories of movies and TV.*

**The Persistence Award:** to Lorna Luft, who flew herself out to Hollywood from New York to audition over and over for producer Allan Carr, trying to convince him that she was perfect for "Grease II." He finally agreed and is now proclaiming her the film find of year.

**The Questionable Taste Award:** to Linda Thompson Jenner, wife of Bruce Jenner, contender for the "Questionable Career" award. She's the mother of an infant son and brought the babe to the set of "Fantasy Island," where she was auditioning for a guest spot. Linda unabashedly breast-fed the tot before a somewhat stunned crew. She didn't get the part.

Anything you'd like to know about prominent personalities? Write: "Between the Lines," Terre Haute Tribune-Star, 721 Wabash Ave., Terre Haute, Ind., 47808. We regret we cannot answer any letters individually.



## Historically Speaking

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## Spring tonic found in area parks

Ts Valley 4-18-82

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

With the arrival of spring (and where is spring more beautiful than in Indiana), many Hoosiers are aroused from their winter lethargy and overcome with the urge to take to the highway. A visit to a park on a sunny spring day is quite a tonic — to a city park or a state park.

Close by is Turkey Run State Park, which has an interesting history in addition to its beautiful scenery. Captain Salmon Lusk, after doing his heroic bit in the Battle of Tippecanoe, was given 1,000 acres on Sugar Creek in Parke County in 1821.

Here he lived and prospered, becoming a wealthy exporter of Indiana products — flour, meal, cured meats, etc., which he sent on rafts of tulip poplar logs down the waterways to New Orleans.

There the thrifty pioneer sold not only his produce but also the logs in the rafts to New Orleans cabinet makers to construct the furniture which winds its way back to Indiana as "southern antiques" even though it was originally made from Wabash-weathered lumber.

His son, John Lusk, inherited the land and lived there as a recluse for 35 years, refusing repeated offers to sell his timber to lumber merchants. Lusk was an eccentric old gentleman, but his very eccentricity saved this locality with its natural beauty for the state.

When he died in 1915, a loyal group of Hoosiers worked hard to secure it as a state park in commemoration of Indiana's 100th birthday. Turkey Run State Park, all 1,301 acres, was established in 1916 and named for the great flocks of wild turkeys which sought refuge among its rocks and canyons.

More than 200 species of birds, including some rare migratory species, have been identified there. Even the rare white heron has been reported wading in Sugar Creek. Bird-watchers enjoy Turkey Run.

Near Jasonville, Ind., is Shakamak State Park. This area of 1,021 acres was a gift of Clay, Greene and Sullivan counties and

established as a state park in 1929. The name Shakamak was originally given by the Indians to a nearby stream and means "River of Long Fish."

Part of this land was homesteaded by my great-great-grandfather, Wyatt Johnson, and his wife Seena Pitts, and their large family. They lie buried in the Old Burris Cemetery nearby.

Another interesting park is the Shades in Parke County. When this rugged, timbered area was acquired for state park purposes, it had been called the "Shades of Death" for many years. A pioneer tragedy was responsible for the ghostly title.

Many years ago when the few cabins in the area were reached by dim foot trails, there lived a sullen man who became violent when drunk and his second young wife who was badly mistreated. Whenever this man was intoxicated (most of the time) he would sharpen his axe and threaten his wife's life.

One day when she suspected he was bluffing no longer and her time had come, she waited until he fell into a drunken stupor, picked up the freshly-sharpened axe and hit him in the head. She trudged for miles to the nearest cabin to give herself up.

The neighbors were aware of the man's threats, and the court acquitted her as having acted in self-defense. His body was placed on an ox-sled and hauled to a spot in the center of the forest for burial. No wonder the area carried such a somber name until it was shortened to "Shades."

An old Indian legend told of the Lover's Leap at Shades. A high bluff was supposed to have been where an Indian maiden leaped to her death after her brave had been killed in battle. Many of the old settlers told of seeing her ghost and hearing her dying screams. Present day realists would explain all this by pointing out that the wind makes strange noises blowing through trees and high rocks, and that anyone who wants to can see a ghost.

Closer to home are the 600 acres

of city parks. W.S. Rea donated 160 acres at Seventh and Davis for the 18-hole golf course. His widow, Geraldine Rea, donated the clubhouse.

The only riverside park, Fairbanks, located at First and Park streets, was donated by Crawford, Edward P., and Helen Fairbanks. This 38 acres holds the Chauncey Rose Memorial and natural amphitheatre, sunken gardens, part of Dresser Drive and the now defunct mineral water fountain.

Collett Park at Seventh and Maple, the oldest city park donated by Josephus Collett, contains 21.1 acres. Undergoing renovation is Spencer Ball Park, 14th and Eighth Avenue, which contains 9.86 acres. Newspaper publisher Spencer Ball left income from approximately \$25,000 for the use of the park department.

Demas Deming donated Deming Boulevard along with \$50,000 for improvements, so the city named Deming Park for him. It contains 160 acres east of Frutridge and Ohio.

Torner Park, Fourth and College, and the Girls Club were donated by Rebecca Torner, former school teacher. Simon Levi donated the

income from \$50,000 for music in the parks following the death of his sister.

A portion of the park at 14th and Wabash was donated by the Beach and Gilbert families. It contains 3.85 acres and its high valuation is due to its business location. Originally named for Henry Steeg, former mayor, it has been called Hobo Park and most recently Gilbert Park.

Booker T. Washington Park, 13th and College, contains 5.32 acres. Sheridan Park, 28th and Beech, contains 6.50 acres donated by Frank Miller, Albert Owens and Felix Blankenbaker.

Other city parks include Herz (or Rose) Park, 5.18 acres at 15th and Locust; Voorhees Park, 17.4 acres at Voorhees and Prairieton Road; Graham Park, 17th and Deming of .96 acre; and Memorial Park, 9.77 acres at Fourth and Eighth Avenue.

The smallest park is .21 acres at Lafayette and Barbour avenues, known as Boy Scout Park. Thompson Park, 17th and Oak streets, contains 4.73 acres. The Stadium Park, 30th and Wabash, offers a nine-hole golf course on its 51.30 acres with the exclusion of the football stadium owned by Indiana State University.

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**Q.** I just saw a terrific movie called "Quest for Fire" and I noticed that one of the actresses was named Rae Dawn Chong. She isn't related to Cheech and Chong, is she? — K. McGrady, Los Alamos, Calif.

**A.** She is the 20-year-old daughter of Tommy Chong and it's a good thing that daddy specializes in comedy of the outrageous vein because daughter Dawn's film role was pretty strange. She plays a woman in the prehistoric Ivaki tribe and since there was no such thing as designer jeans in those days, her costume consisted only of layers of striped body paint — an outfit that might make a father nervous. Then there was her dialogue, specially devised by author Anthony Burgess to simulate prehistoric speech, and her jerky actions created by anthropologist Desmond Morris. Just another night of her father's patented "Sweet Dreams" type of routine, it might seem, but to Dawn, it was one considerable acting challenge. "There was no way to really train for that role," she says. "After all, how many people know how to be Neanderthals?"



# BETWEEN THE LINES

## THE STORY BEHIND THE STORIES YOU READ ABOUT CELEBRITIES

By Josie



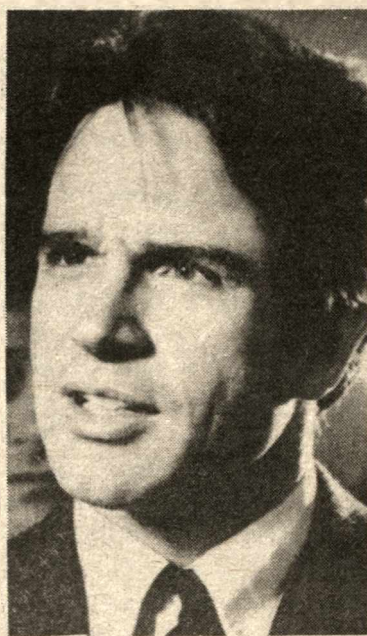
**Q.** Sissy Spacek seems like such a quiet country girl. How does she cope with the crowds of fans when she goes out? — L. Casey, Greenville, Mich.

**A.** She does a little fixed smile and quick handshake maneuver that she learned from Alan Alda. "It's a lot quicker and a lot more personal than an autograph," she says. And yes, she is still pretty quiet and pretty country — she gets nervous in those situations. There is one case, however, in which crowds don't seem to bother her — shopping. On her last trip to New York, she tried out her brand new Bloomingdale's charge card with an extensive foray through the designer sections of that dazzling shopper's paradise. Then Sissy did a side trip to the designer showrooms on Seventh Avenue to make sure she hadn't missed anything. Then, for a much needed rest, she and husband Jack Fisk hightailed it down to their farm in Virginia.

**FINALLY, ANOTHER OPINION:** Those who have had it up to here with descriptions of Brooke Shields' beauty should applaud Robin Williams' observation. In a routine about running into current actors in an old age home several decades from now, he greets the former nymphet, now middle aged. "Brooke, how are you, baby? I see your eyebrows finally grew together!"

**YOU'VE NEVER SEEN 'SINGIN' IN THE RAIN'?:** Poor Debbie Reynolds. She was recently put on the spot when introduced to the preteen cast of orphans of the musical "Annie." Obviously, the moppets had never caught any of Debbie's movie moments. They actually didn't know who she was. But not for long. "I'm Princess Leia's mother," she said, knowing that every child must have seen daughter Carrie Fisher in "Star Wars" by now. This group certainly had. They cheered.

**COMFORT FOR VIDEO GAME ADDICTS:** Those who cannot get through a day without "Pac Man" can rest assured that they are not alone. Joni Mitchell was recently spotted in a Manhattan club involved in quite a heavy game, but she has a twist: she sings along with the machine. And William Hurt is under the spell, too. He recently placed an order in a New York restaurant, then went off to play "Pac Man" and refused to come back when his food was delivered.



**Q.** Diane Keaton and Warren Beatty seemed to be involved in an on and off affair. From his reputation, I would assume he would make a woman very jealous. Does he? — Kathi B., Roseburg, Ore.

**A.** It sure seems that way. One illuminating example comes courtesy of Margaret Trudeau in her new book, "Consequences," recounting the night she and Beatty were set to meet for drinks in the bar of the Carlyle Hotel. During the next few hours, during which the two were discussing Margaret's film career, or so she says, Keaton had him paged three times. Since the messages were nothing urgent Trudeau deduced that these were merely monitoring calls to confirm that she and Beatty hadn't repaired upstairs.

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Valley  
Ts 5-23-82  
By DOROTHY J. CLARK

# Pioneer life was accented with fun

Long before the days of movies, disco, roller skating, bowling alleys, color television and the like, our pioneer ancestors managed to have quite a bit of fun along with their hard life. They were fond of social gatherings of all kinds — log-rollings, cabin or barn-raising, chopping matches, butchering, cotton-picking, corn-shucking, quilting bees, visiting between families, holidays and even muster days, all were sources of pleasure.

But the most hilarious, joyful occasions were weddings and "infare." Few girls ever passed their teens without marrying, and good mothers looked upon their growing daughters as so many pledges of their future triumphs in the culinary and housekeeping arts.

All the family and most of the neighbors were invited guests at these weddings. Every family in reach contributed to the general feast with delicacies, knicknacks and even their personal services. The table groaned with meats, fowls, custards, pies, cakes, etc.

The marriage ceremony was performed at early candlelight. Then the feasting commenced and continued until everyone could eat no

more. The table was then cleared and moved for play or dancing, depending on the religious sentiments of the old folks. Entertainment continued until late bedtime or until the wee hours of the morning.

## Run For The Bottle

But the great excitement always happened the next day in "running for the bottle." No matter how well kept the secret of the betrothal might have been, every young man in the neighborhood who had a horse with any sign of speed would put his nag in training as soon as he heard the news.

The company met at the home of the bride to accompany the happy pair to the "infare." Within a mile or two of their destination the group would halt. All who intended to race would move to the front, and at a signal dashed away, helter skelter, to be the first to reach the door of the bridegroom's parents.

At this door the old folks were always ready with a large jug or bottle to hand to the first arrival. With a shout of triumph, the winner would ride back as fast as possible to meet the company. The bottle was handed to the bridegroom who gallantly held it to the lips of his bride before taking a drink. Then,

wiping the mouth of the bottle with his coat sleeve, he passed it round the company until the jug was drained.

A brisk canter would bring the entire group to the home of the bride's parents where the same process of feast and frolic was repeated.

## Cabin Raising

If the bridegroom was a young man of prudence and foresight, he had nothing to do after the infare was over but shoulder his axe, pick up a chunk of fire, and march off with his new wife to their newly built cabin. If for some reason this had not been accomplished, an appropriate site was selected, and all the friends and neighbors congregated again.

As if by magic the log cabin with its mud and stick chimney, the clay-back and jambs, the puncheon floor and table, the clapboard door, and the wooden latch with the latch string always hanging out was constructed.

The women came to cook and visit while the men worked. With their axes they cut deep notches in the log ends, lifted the logs in place one on top of the other, fitting them

together in a square by the notches. As the four walls of the new cabin rose higher and higher, the men worked at the corners to keep the walls straight and true.

When the walls were higher than a man's head, two gable ends were built up to a point with shorter logs. A long pole, called a ridgepole, was laid across the point of the gables. When this was done, the four corner men stood on their heads on the ridgepole to celebrate.

At noon everyone was ready for the big dinner served on long tables under the trees. After dinner they all sang, played games, danced or watched the physical contests. This was the fun of cabin-raising.

By midafternoon each family set out for home. If there were streams to cross and poorly marked trails through the woods it was important to reach home before dark.

Later the new home owner had to finish his house. Poles were placed from the top of the log walls to the ridgepole and slabs of wood, called shakes, were laid over them for a roof. Openings were cut in the walls for windows and greased paper would serve to let in light but keep out the wind.

Every pioneer couple started out in this type of home in early Wabash Valley days.

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Valley Photo by Bill Williams

## Music, theaters and vaudeville . . .

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

The concern for the fast disappearing downtown business area and the threat of losing the Indiana Theatre brought a flood of mail and telephone calls from interested readers. Sharing memories of earlier Terre Haute is just one of the happy results of this column.

Indiana State University Professor Emeritus, 1964, and past chairman of music Arthur D. Hill Sr. told how his father moved here in 1912 offering access to a community larger than villages for the first time. Young Arthur wandered curiously around town and found a fascinating structure on Ohio Street called Young's Airdrome. It stood at the northeast corner of Fourth and Ohio streets, surrounded by a six-foot fence over which he could see a neat structure of what we would now call a proscenium arch, but with the tiny stage in front of the arch.

Many history courses later he learned that the place was called a bier-garten by the Germans, and was beyond doubt just that in fact, a beer garden. There is no evidence that professional talent was used, that it was entirely amateur.

"History tells us," wrote Professor Hill, "that great masses of fine German intellectuals came here in great numbers beginning in 1850. Indeed the event is known as the

German Intellectual Revolution."

"In addition to bier-gartens, great numbers of musicians came along. They founded a symphony orchestra in New York, in St. Louis, in Cincinnati and in Milwaukee. The latter moved down to Chicago. Germany's loss was certainly our gain."

According to Professor Hill, vaudeville began in Terre Haute in late 1918 at the Varieties Theatre on the southwest corner of Eighth Street and Wabash Avenue. He was the "pit-leader" of the seven man group furnishing the music for the acts.

Five acts of typical Broadway vaudeville of the day along with a medium-length Hollywood silent film made up the program which was changed weekly. The orchestra played for the vaudeville acts and for a relatively small portion of the film. An organist accompanied the rest of the film.

Shannon Katzenbaugh was manager of the Varieties, and Ike Ades, the treasurer and probably the one who financed the entire project.

Sometime between 1918 and 1920, Hill recalls, the Hippodrome was built. It offered a vaudeville only program. A violinist named Will H. Bryant was pit-leader there. He did not recall exactly how long it remained open, but its life was relatively short. The Varieties be-

came solely a movie house, and its name later became the Liberty.

In the meantime, the Indiana Theatre was built here in 1920. It was one of seven theatres built in Illinois and Indiana at the same time. There were three in Chicago, two in downstate Illinois, one in Indianapolis and in Terre Haute, both named Indiana. Our sister theatre later became known as the Indiana Repertory Theater, near the Circle on West Washington Street.

The theater world of the day was quite sure that Hollywood funds were involved, recalled Hill. "Hollywood seemed to be thinking big. It had produced the lavish film, 'Birth Of A Nation,' and wanted to do still bigger things." Building lavish theaters across the country was part of that plan.

All three of the local downtown vaudeville theaters had generally good acoustics. All auditoriums were "live" and the stages were basically live in tonal response. It had long been known that any stage must be equipped with painted canvas curtains, and standing pieces such as wings and other set pieces as the extras were known. The Varieties and the Hippodrome were well equipped and had fine acoustics.

"However, Hollywood wanted to improve on such stage equipment at the Indiana," wrote Hill. "Instead of

using heavy canvas, treated as described, it showed total ignorance and replaced sound reflecting materials with lavish velvet curtains. Such material absorbs sound! The stage of the Indiana, so equipped, was hopelessly dead in acoustical properties."

On one occasion, Hill and Townsley, the director, tried out a simple wandering gypsy fiddler act on that stage. Neither could hear the other. A hopelessly dead stage was clearly demonstrated.

The velvets are still hanging. Therefore only the forefront of the stage, perhaps six feet, can be successfully used. In theater terms, only the street scene is usable.

In 1924 radio appeared, and listeners remained at home in vast droves. In 1926 Hollywood came up with sound film. Now a highly select group of largely New York musicians took over the tasks of the many pit musicians. It was a cataclysmic blow to thousands of good musicians.

"Radio City Music Hall in New York's Rockefeller Center reflects the period mentioned here," wrote Hill. "A family type sound film is shown. Then an organist plays a little memorial to those earlier days, as does a pit orchestra. Then 50 lovely legged gals do a very simple kicking routine. All is a brief bit of memorial to those early days of vaudeville."

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# BETWEEN THE LINES

THE STORY BEHIND THE STORIES YOU READ ABOUT CELEBRITIES

By Josie



Stacy Keach

**Q.** I just had the marvelous experience of watching "The Blue and the Gray" in which Stacy Keach was outstanding. What information can you give me concerning Mr. Keach — age, birthplace, what he's been in, what he'll do next, married, etc.? Candace J. Mady, Dublin, Va.

**A.** On a long-distance call from his Malibu ranch, Stacy was full of information — for one, he is just thrilled about all the attention he's getting due to "The Blue and the Gray." "I'm actually getting famous," he says. "That's never happened before. And I never really wanted it to — personalities come and go so fast, especially when the medium is TV. But this is great — I guess it's never too late to become a star."

Because of the popularity of the mini-series, he's getting a lot of calls with offers — one to reprise his role of Jonas Steele in the planned sequel of "The Blue and the Gray," which he isn't too sure about accepting ("I think I liked the character better when he had both of his arms," he laughs). He absolutely refuses to play variations of roles he's played before.

"You have to go on to something new," he says. "Acting is really all about acrobatics and challenges." His career reflects it: films like "The Long Riders" which he co-wrote and co-produced with his brother James, the current "That Championship Season," John Huston's "Fat City," "Doc," "Brewster McCloud," and "Butterfly."

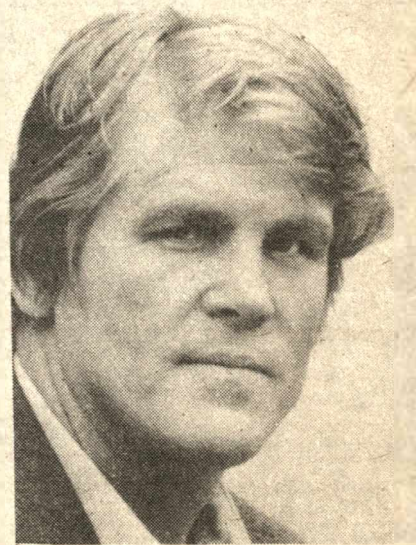
To follow this, then, he plans a return to Broadway in an ambitious play titled "K-2." It's about two mountain climbers stranded perilously on a ledge. To prepare for the role, he's taking lessons to learn how to climb. No small feat, since he's "terrified of heights." After that, he's trying to finish the screenplay to the "Long Riders" sequel. "It might be done by, say, 1985."

On the personal side, he was born June 2, 1941 in Savannah, Ga., raised in L.A. He's married to his third wife, Jill Donohue, a former landscape designer, whom he met through their mutual friend Jill St. John. They are, he says, "sickeningly compatible." When not working on his career, they're on the ranch riding horses.

## AWFULLY SENSITIVE FOR SUCH A TOUGH GUY...

Nick Nolte's walkout from "Saturday Night Live" the day before he was supposed to go on the air as host still has them bristling on the NBC set. Rumors that he was feuding with producer Dick Ebersol (who is publicly feuding with comedian Andy Kaufman) were the first to surface, but the real reason, reportedly, has more to do with Nolte's bruised ego.

It seems that his film with "SNL" star Eddie Murphy, "48 HRS," opened in New York two days before with great reviews for Murphy and lousy ones for him. So he went home. Not a great sport.



Nick Nolte



John Duttine

**Q.** We watched Masterpiece Theater's "To Serve Them All My Days" and have taken quite an interest in John Duttine, the young, appealing actor who plays David Powlett-Jones. Could you tell us about him? S.C., Princeton, N.J.

**A.** Gladly. He's 33, even more appealing with his off-camera beard. Duttine's from a background not too different from that of Powlett-Jones: working class from Bradford, an industrial town in the north of England. He distrusted and detested the academies of privilege like Bamfylde, the school in the series, and was a terrible student.

"Acting," he says, "was all I could do. And it was my exit out of an existence that could have been extremely dull and dreary. My only abilities were technical ones which would have led me to a job in a factory if a teacher hadn't pointed me toward acting." (His mother, ironically, wanted him to be a teacher, a view she maintained after watching him portray one so well in "To Serve...")

He started in theater at the Drama Center in London, did repertory at the Citizens Theater in Glasgow and switched almost exclusively to TV nine years ago. He's done well by it. His performance as "P.-J." won him Britain's "Best Television Actor Award" in 1981. ■

Anything you'd like to know about prominent personalities? Write: Josie, SUNDAY WOMAN magazine, 235 E. 45th Street, New York, N.Y. 10017. Sorry, we can't answer any letters individually.



and fortune to Terre Haute

# Race horse Axtell brought fame

By Dorothy J. Clark

## Historically speaking

During the Gay Nineties, the great race horse Axtell did more to make Terre Haute famous than all its industries put together. Horsemen from all over the country flocked to Terre Haute during race week.

In the fall of 1891, the Terre Haute Gazette reported the exciting news that "stables of fast horses were arriving daily for race week." The fairgrounds were put in shape, and all the improvements on the grounds had been completed.

The street car company had put 25 new incandescent lights under the amphitheatre and offered to furnish the power. The new stands for the starter and the judges were called "beauties." The old judges' stand was to be used for a bandstand, and had been moved back about 75 feet from the stretch.

Governor Merriam of Minnesota and Mr. Pillsbury notified W. P. Ijams they were coming here in their special railroad cars for race week. The hotels were completely

booked up.

A number of horses went for the record at the Race Matinee Sept. 30, 1891. The stables of Warren Park, Edgewood Farm, Thos. Dickerson, and others, were full, so there were plenty of starters. An interesting time was promised, and the public was invited.

The stable of M. E. McHenry, Geneseo, Ill., included Charleston, 2:14, and Labasco, 2:16½, two of the most famous horses in the country. From Cambridge City, Bob Stewart's string included Walter E., Grant's Abdallah, Ryland T., and Eva Wilkes.

The next day's news reported that Nancy Hanks, the famous Kentucky mare, had knocked another point off her record at Richmond, lowering her 2:09 mark.

By Oct. 5, the grounds and track were reported in fine shape. The flags were flying from the flagstaffs, the grounds were "as green as

emerald," and the bar and lunch stands under the grandstand were set for trade.

Beginning Saturday noon, the sale of seats began. For four days previously, the 26 boxes containing 212 seats had already been sold. In addition, the 476 chairs back of the boxes had been reserved at 25 cents each. Thousands and thousands of general admission seats were open to the public.

Visitors from all over the United States, horse lovers and racing fans, famous drivers, breeders, and sports writers from all the big city newspapers were in attendance. The races were called for 1:30 p.m., and the program included the Wabash Two-Year-Old Stake valued at \$1,600; the 2:16 pace, and the Hal Pointer-Direct match race.

It was always a thrill to see Axtell, still king of the trotters. Although he was not being raced, he was shown on the track in harness. Reports

were that offers of more than \$6,000 had been refused for Can't Tell, a yearling full sister to Axtell. She was valued at \$10,000. Drexell, a four monthold full brother to Axtell was so promising that \$12,000 had been offered for him.

Oct. 8, Nancy Hanks failed to break the record of Maus S, only running 2:11½ and the record was 2:08¾.

Gambling must have been an important part of horse racing in those days, as 10 croupiers were employed to handle the Wheels of Fortune and the Hieronymus tables. However, legalized gambling at the track was frowned upon by some of the city fathers. They felt it was taking too much money out of the city.

Perhaps this was the reason the banks closed for a half-day holiday on race days, or maybe it was only to allow employees to see the races along with all the townspeople. Proving that the races of 1891 were well attended, receipts for one day equalled the receipts of the entire 1890 race week.

On Margaret Avenue just east of the intersection with State Road 63 in Honey Creek Township, was Warren Park Farm, originally the home of Levi Gale Warren, organizer and first president of the old State Bank (now Memorial Hall), and inherited by W. P. Ijams, then his daughter, Alice Ijams Benbridge, who sold it for development as Honey Creek Square Mall.

Southeast of the brick home was the burial place of Axtell, the famous trotter purchased by Ijams for the then exorbitant price of \$105,000. The grave was marked by a large boulder and an evergreen tree.

To the east of this grave was Axtell's red brick private stable, complete with his personal groom's quarters. The small building was later converted to a dwelling, but the extra wide front doors were kept through which the famous horse and sulky were driven into the barn.

Axtell was described as "a rich bay with large star and snip, 16

hands high, weighing 1,200 lbs., and foaled in 1886." He won national recognition as a two-year-old trotter going 2:23. In 1889 he became world renowned when he set the record of 2:12 as a three-year-old, and was retired to stud.

This record, made with an old-fashioned, high-wheeled sulky, a crude affair compared with modern standards, having neither rubber tires or ball bearings, stood for 17 years.

The black groom who traveled all over the world with Axtell was Joe Duffy, a faithful employee for the Ijams family for over 65 years until his death.

Axworthy, son of Axtell, was born and bred at Warren Park Farm and trained at the Terre Haute track. As a three-year-old he set the record of 2:05½. An injury took him off the track, and he was sold for \$500. He became known as one of the great sires of trotting colts, among them General Watts, who trotted a mile in 2:06¼.

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Community Affairs File



# Ringgold Band inspired others

By Dorothy J. Clark

In 1876, when Jacob Breinig and his friend, George Sickford, attended the Centennial celebration in Philadelphia, they were so impressed with the original Ringgold Band performing there they decided to give that name to their own band, the first real band organized in Terre Haute.

Jacob Breinig was born in Saarbrücken, Germany. His musical education was gained in Leipzig where he was forced to walk four miles to take music lessons. The family migrated first to Vincennes. After serving four years in the Civil War, he moved his family to Terre Haute.

There were at least eight children, including Kate who married Rosenberg, moved to Asheville, N.C., and lived to be over 100; Anna who married Pritchett, and died at the age of 94; Mary "Molly" who married Dailey and lived in Indianapolis; Cecelia who married Ohlendorf and lived in Chicago; Otyla who married Carter and lived in Wheeling, Ill.; and sons Frank, Henry and Peter Breinig.

All the children were understandably proud of their talented father. They grew up in a home filled with music. Orchestra rehearsals were held in the big double parlors of the Breinig home in Gilbert Park on 14th Street just south of Wabash Avenue.

## Historically speaking

They were the second family to build in this location.

All the children were musically talented to some degree. Kate had a lovely singing voice and sang with her father in St. Benedict's choir as well as soloist. Frank was as proficient on the clarinet as Henry was on the French horn. This inherited talent also appeared in several of the grandchildren.

In addition to being a band and orchestra conductor, teacher and performer, Jacob Breinig was noted as a fine arranger of music. When John Philip Sousa was in Terre Haute, he asked Breinig to arrange some music for him. At that time he inquired why Breinig didn't make better use of his talents and command a larger income by working in New York City.

For over 20 years, Breinig took his Ringgold Band to the major competitions all over the midwest, winning prizes for "best band" at Evansville and Bowling Green. He also led the 24th and 91st Indiana Volunteer Bands. At the old Naylor Opera House, Breinig conducted the orchestra for fine concerts and for the performances of the noted Madame Schumann-Heink.

According to the Breinig family, they remembered when Paul

Dresser appeared at their home to sing his new song "On The Banks of the Wabash" in their parlor and ask for Breinig's assistance in arranging the music.

Open-air band concerts were held downtown in nice weather. Breinig would lead his band on the bandstand near the northwest corner of Seventh and Wabash, about where Paige's Music Store is now. The candy stores in the area enjoyed a business boom during these events. The large audiences sat on the grassy lawn of the Riley McKeen home located where the Post Office is now.

McKeen was one of Breinig's closest friends. Card playing was a favorite recreation, and their fellow cardplayers were Boudinot, Martin of Rosedale, and Hirzel whose name is carved in stone on the front of the building at the northwest corner of Ninth and Eagle streets.

Too soft-hearted for his own good, Breinig had over 20 violins in his possession at the time of his death. They had been left with him as security for loans he had made to needy musicians.

The musicians of the Ringgold Band all had other trades to follow except Breinig and his son Pete. Many of the men were printers. Henry Harrison was a carpet weaver

in a little house next to Hoff's Grocery at 13th and Wabash. Only a very few men have been able to derive their entire livelihood from music in Terre Haute.

Before the turn of the century, the Ringgold Band and Orchestra was an important part of Terre Haute's cultural life. The orchestra played at all the important weddings, funerals, receptions, garden parties, holiday festivities and balls, as well as required performances at the Naylor Opera House.

The Ringgold Band with its magnificent uniforms and strutting drum major was the main attraction of all the parades in town. There were circus parades, political parades, patriotic parades, fraternal parades, floralbedecked horse-drawn carriage parades, and the solemn crape-hung funeral processions to the cemetery.

A well organized funeral back in those days was not complete without the Ringgold Band playing the funeral march for the horse-drawn hearse and the mourners walking or riding in their carriages and buggies on the way to Woodlawn Cemetery.

The name of the Ringgold Band has been used down through the years by different groups. The older directors of Musicians Local No. 25 who had played with the original Ringgold Band used the name when they went out on jobs. For a time, the name was used for a children's band organized in Terre Haute.

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# Area residents loved bikes

Community Affairs File

*Clark, Dorothy*  
The Gay Nineties were made even more exciting by the bicycle craze that hit America with a wallop along in the late 1880s and continued well after the turn of the century. It's an old American custom to go all out for a new fad until another one comes along to take its place. The hysteria of early automobiling was to overshadow the waning bicycle mania.

It all started in 1816 when Baron von Drais, a game warden in Karlsruhe, Germany, weary from treading his endless forest paths, attached two wheels to a bar on which he sat, and by pushing first with one foot and then the other, propelled himself merrily along. The idea caught on and spread like wild fire throughout the world.

When the fad hit Terre Haute, all the bicycle enthusiasts banded together and founded the Terre Haute Bicycle Club, which later became the Terre Haute Wheelmen's Association. The club organized races and trips, held discussions concerning all phases of bike riding, and argued the merits of various makes of bikes. A 12-mile race was held annually, and each season's activities closed with a ball at Dowling Hall.

In addition to the Sunday afternoon rides, the fad was responsible for another diversion, the Century Runs sponsored by the Century Road Clubs of America. In the few localities where roads would permit, club members organized 50-mile expeditions out of town and, since they had to be on the job Monday morning, 50 miles back home.

Starting at sunrise Sunday, it was long after sunset when the last straggler returned, completely exhausted. At the turning point there

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By Dorothy Clark  
Special to The Tribune-Star

was fun for all with rest, food and Coca-Cola. The dreaded tire puncture required a do-it-yourself technique.

The first Century Run from Terre Haute was mapped out in 1887 and covered a terrain of over 100 miles. It included trips to Prairieton and return, Rockville and return, and Clinton and return, and was estimated to require 14 hours for completion. Anton Hulman Sr. finished the run of 106 miles in 11 hours and 37 minutes.

Club members looked forward to the races at the fairs held in the surrounding area. Gold and silver medals were presented to the winners, and state champions received a silver cup. In 1886, Herman Hulman Jr. won the silver cup. The following three years his brother Anton won the cups.

In May, 1887, Anton and two of his friends bicycled to Clinton one Sunday. When they came to the railroad bridge, the other youths dismounted and wheeled their bikes across. Hulman mounted his wheel on the steel rail and rode his bike

across without weaving or slipping. Those who witnessed his daredevil feat were horrified to realize his danger.

In 1892 Fred G. Heinl, John S. Cox and Camille Urban decided to form a cycle club. The first meeting was in the Stahl-Urban Overall Factory with 40 charter members. Later they met in Gundelfinger's store room, the Savings Bank building, the National State Bank building, and later a cottage at 224 N. Eighth St.

The rapidly increasing membership made it necessary to find larger quarters. With more than 150 members, the club moved to 713½-715½ Wabash, assuming the lease of the former public library. Club records show they transformed the quarters into "magnificently furnished and artistically decorated reception room, card room, billiard room and reading room."

A photo of the huge reception room shows the patterned carpet, gas light chandeliers, heavily upholstered furniture with fringe, padded seating encircling the center columns, potted palms, and ornately framed paintings on the walls.

Each year the club gave a tin bucket picnic, a race meet, a coasting contest, several billiard matches and a century run. For several years an annual run was made to Rockville. One year 850 wheelmen took part. The course was later changed to Cayuga and return. In 1896 the League of American Wheelmen staged a successful state meet in Terre Haute. Club members entertained their ladies with frequent dancing parties.

Bicycle racers of today had their counterparts in the "scorchers" of yesterday. Anyone pushing his bike up around 20 miles an hour was a scorcher in the 1890s. Charley Murphy in 1899 rode the fastest mile ever covered by a man on a bicycle when he achieved 57 4/5 sec. behind a locomotive on Long Island.

Anton Hulman Sr. resumed his bicycle activities in 1893 after several years absence from competition. He had continued to attend most of the local club meetings. Before he had retired from active racing, he had won several cups for state championship, and in 1893 again rode off with the honor. The following year he won both state and national meets. By 1897 he held all but one of the League of American Wheelmen state championship cups, and that one was held by his brother Herman.

Local competitions brought greater satisfaction to Hulman. Winning the difficult Coal Creek Hill Climb twice distinguished him as a leader in his home town. In 1896 he completed the climb in 44 seconds. In 1897, even with added rules governing the event, he beat Will H. Meyers for first place by 11 seconds.

That same year, Anton Hulman and Harry Staff, on a tandem bike, won the annual run staged by the Century Road Club. They completed the return trip from Cayuga to Terre Haute in the fast time of two hours and 40 minutes.

But, alas, some genius finally hitched a gasoline engine to a bicycle and the motorcycle and automobile were born. The Golden Age of the Bicycle was over, but its color and charm will always remain a part of our heritage.

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# Activities abounded

## Townsfolk had plenty to do 100 years ago

DEC 9 1984

Clark, Dorothy +  
Lodges (wv)

It was a French visitor, Alexis de Tocqueville, who noted back in the early 1800s that "Americans of all ages, all conditions and all dispositions constantly form associations ... religious, moral, serious, futile, restricted, enormous or diminitive."

Almost 14,000 societies, associations, leagues, brotherhoods or sisterhoods and other organizations of national importance are listed in the Gale Research Co.'s Encyclopedia of Associations. No one knows how many more must exist on a state or local basis.

According to Terre Haute's first city directory, published in 1858, the city boasted of its three newspapers, five banks and 13 churches. It also was very proud of its four Masonic lodges — Social Lodge No. 86, Terre Haute Council No. 8, Terre Haute Chapter No. 11 and Terre Haute Lodge No. 19.

The Odd Fellows (I.O.O.F.) had established Terre Haute Lodge No. 51, Fort Harrison Lodge No. 156, Vigo Encampment No. 17 and the Daughters of Rebekah.

The Evening Star Temple of Honor No. 50 met at its quarters over the American Express Office, west side of the court house square every Monday evening. The Morning Star Social Temple No. 38 met on Friday evenings, while the Excelsior Degree Temple of Honor No. 29 met at Templars Hall twice a month.

Two local benevolent societies met regularly — the German Benevolent Society met monthly at the Union House on Wabash

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between Fourth and Fifth streets. The Hibernian Benevolent Society met twice a month in the "hall over the Old America, Market Street, north of Wabash Street."

In 1858 Terre Haute boasted of five halls — City Hall, Market north of Ohio; Carr's Hall, corner Fourth and Walnut; Corinthian Hall, corner Wabash and Market; Masonic Hall, Second between Wabash and Ohio; Odd Fellows Hall, Wabash between Fourth and Fifth; and St. Charles Hall, corner Market and Cherry streets.

By the 1880s, local men had fought in the Civil War, and those who returned joined military organizations. The Dick Thompson Zouaves, formed in 1883, met at the Armory, 22½ S. Third St. The Hager Veterans, organized in 1879, met at the Armory Savings Bank Block. The McKean Rifles, formed in 1884, met in the Armory, northwest corner Sixth and Main. Terre Haute Light Artillery met in

the Armory at 228½ Main. Some of this group lived in West Terre Haute.

Musical societies included the Apollo Band and Orchestra, 322 Ohio; Oratorio Society, organized 1877, which met at Normal School; the Caecilia Singing Society which met at the southwest corner of Fifth and Main; the Ringgold Band which met at Dowling Hall; and the Terre Haute Maennerchor which met twice a week at Turner Hall, on Ninth Street between Main and Ohio.

A century ago, the city directory listed 38 miscellaneous societies, unions and clubs. They included the Altar Society of St. Joseph's Church; Amalgamated Association of Iron & Steel Workers; four Divisions of the Ancient Order Hibernians; Chautauqua Literary & Scientific Circle; Cigar Makers Protective Union No. 50; Coopers Protective Association of North America, Division No. 2; and the Decorative Arts Society.

Also: the Fire Underwriters; Fort Harrison Club; German Aid & Benevolent Association; Hebrew Ladies' Aid Society; Hibernian Benevolent Society; Iron Molders' Union (M.U. of N.A. No. 17); Knights of Father Matthew; Knights of Erin; Ladies' Aid Society; Nail Plate Feeders' Association; Occidental Literary Society; and the Paper Hangers' Association of Terre Haute.

In addition: the Physicians' Protective Association; Pythonian Literary Society; St. Joseph's Total Abstinence Society; Terre Haute

Social Club; Terre Haute Horticultural Society; Terre Haute Law Club; Terre Haute Typographical Union; Terre Haute Turn Verin; Terre Haute Liquor Dealers' Association; Terre Haute Literary Club; Vigo County Bible Society; Vigo County Medical Society; Vigo County Temperance Council; Vigo Trotting Association; Woman's Reading Club; and the Young Ladies' Sodality of St. Joseph's Church.

The list of secret societies in 1884 went on and on. By this time, there were eight Masonic lodges; their hall was at 644½ Main St. The Odd Fellows now had six lodges; their hall at 654½ Main St. There were five groups of Knights of Pythias; two groups of Independent Order Foresters; seven groups of the Ancient Order United Workmen; and Freya Lodge No. 5 of the Druids.

Also, Knights of the Golden Rule; seven lodges of the Knights of Honor; the Royal Arcanum Lodge; the Gan Eden Lodge No. 110 of the I.O.B.B.; the Grand Army of the Republic; Order of Chosen Friends; American Legion of Honor; Brotherhoods of Locomotive Firemen and Engineers; Order of Railway Conductors; Royal Templars of Temperance; and the Independent Order of Good Templars.

If by chance there was not a lodge meeting to attend, men could frequent two beer gardens, four billiard halls, 19 restaurants and 116 saloons in 1884. And the Terre Haute Base Ball Association was located at 405½ Main St.



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Clark, Dorothy + Aeronautics (D)

# Ballooning not entirely uplifting

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Ts MAY 19 1985

Balloon ascensions were certainly nothing new when they were introduced to the Wabash Valley. After all, the first public demonstration of such an event was put on by the Montgolfier brothers in France in 1783. That same year Jacques A.C. Charles proved that hydrogen gas could be more effective than hot air.

Using a varnished silk bag filled with hydrogen, Charles and his companion ascended on a flight that covered 30 miles in two hours. His gas balloon was described as a sphere more than 27 feet in diameter with the upper half enclosed in a net secured to a hoop, which girded the middle of the bag. Long ropes supported a highly ornamental wicker "boat" beneath.

At the bottom of the bag a long narrow neck 7 inches in diameter allowed inflation with hydrogen. A valve at the top, which could be opened or closed by a cord extending to the boat, permitted the aeronaut to release gas whenever necessary.

Except for the fancy boat, Charles' balloon was essentially the same as that used by aeronauts in the United States for the next century and a half. These professionals amazed and entertained the public at Fourth of July celebrations, fairs, carnivals and other festive gatherings. Public acceptance of the dirigible and the airplane was a direct result of these balloon exhibitions.

The first balloon ascension in the United States was June 24, 1784, near Baltimore, Md., by a 13-year-old boy named Edward Warren. This daring feat was done purely for the sport of the thing, not for any scientific facts to be gained.

Ten years passed before the first actual aerial voyage in the U.S. was completed by Jean Pierre Blanchard, a flight of 45 miles from Philadelphia to Gloucester County, N.J.

## Historically speaking



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Young Warren's impulsive venture was of little significance other than for its novelty and daring, but Blanchard proved conclusively the feasibility of flight in a lighter-than-air craft.

During the Civil War, nearly all balloonists volunteered as observers for the Union Army Balloon Corps. After the war, aeronautics achieved new heights of popularity. Innovations were introduced such as rubberized balloon cloth for gas bags, drag ropes to prevent balloons from rising or landing at too rapid a rate. One of the most highly advertised attractions of P.T. Barnum's traveling Hippodrome from 1872 to 1875 was the balloon ascension.

The great boom in balloon exhibitions did not come until the late 1880s following the development of the flexible parachute and its exploitations. The parachute drop from a balloon stimulated in turn the revival of an earlier phase of aeronautics, the use of the hot-air balloon and nearly brought about the exclusion of gas balloons from

exhibitions.

Thomas Scott Baldwin of Quincy, Ill., well-known professional, earned as much as \$1,500 a performance. Attractive fees increased the supply of performers, and prices of exhibitions dropped to \$25 a show for newcomers, \$250 for famous performers.

Soon after 1900, balloon ascensions and parachute jumps declined in popularity. The public had grown tired of the same thing, and in 1903 the Wright brothers gave the world the airplane. The day of balloon ascensions was almost over.

In Terre Haute, Harvey Lawson engaged in this novel and dangerous occupation. A saloon keeper on North Second Street, Peter "Bud" McCoy, acted as his financial backer about the turn of the century. In 1900 Lawson rode the balloon at the county fair and at a circus, which pitched its tent near the northwest corner of First and Chestnut streets. At that time Lawson took a rooster up with him and let it down by means of a primitive parachute.

Another time a large pit was dug at the fairgrounds and a hot fire was built in it of box boards and coal oil. The most dangerous part of the ascension was getting seated on a trapeze that hung from the eight-foot metal ring around the neck of the inflated bag. The trick was not to get burned or overcome with smoke before the balloon could be released. This trapeze type was more commonly used in this area than the conventional wicker basket type.

Lawson's sister was frequently called on to help patch the huge canvas balloon after each performance. It would nearly fill an entire room and entailed a lot of sewing before it was ready for another flight.

One of the problems of riding the balloons in Terre Haute was the danger of the wind carrying the contraption over the Wabash River and landing it suddenly in the water. This happened here on several occasions.

Another time the balloon landed safely south of the distillery. The rider had to find an obliging farmer to haul the unwieldy balloon back to town in his wagon. Along with the glamour and excitement, there was a lot of hard work attached to this unusual occupation.



# Circuses, circa 1873

Is APR 6 1986

Community Affairs File

## 'Twas steady parade and foot after foot of

Winter was officially over when circus posters appeared on barns and fences, and newspapers printed the exciting announcements.

The first circus of 1873 appeared in Terre Haute one day only on April 12. Billed as the Great Eastern Menagerie, Museum, Circus, Aquarium, Roman Hippodrome and Egyptian Caravan, the owners boasted that it was four times larger than last year because more than \$1 million had been spent on improvements.

Covering four acres, there were 12 tents measuring 168,000 yards of canvas exhibiting, 41 dens of live wild beasts, sea monsters, bright plumage birds and flesh-eating reptiles. To transport this huge circus, 100 special cars, six passenger coaches and four engines were used, along with the services of more than 200 men and horses.

The ads told of 20 snakes totaling 644 feet of boa constrictors, pythons and anacondas. The great war elephant "Conqueror" was valued at \$19,000. The wild Wapiti were on view, along with a drove of Bactrian camels, more than 70 varieties of monkeys, two lionesses and their cubs, a sable antelope, a pair of African zebras and a baby hippo. Then there were a double-horned rhino, a pair of Malay tapirs, a llama, two zebus, a pair of large Chacma gorillas, a Burmese cow and calf and a mouflon with four-foot horns. And of course chamois, gazelles, elands, 10 lions, Bengal tigers, leopards, hyenas, panthers, jaguars, ocelots and more than 300 specimens of birds from all over the world including a cage of 50 snowwhite cockatoos.

The downtown street parade was set for 10 a.m., a procession two miles long with music furnished by an emerald, crimson and gold steam piano. Circus performers in costume included 20 beautiful women and 100 horsemen.

Before each performance there was a free balloon ascension. All the railroads running into Terre Haute arranged to charge half fare. Admission to the circus was 50 cents for adults and 25 cents for children.

### Historically speaking



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By Dorothy J. Clark  
Special to The Tribune-Star

The second circus to come to town that year was John Robinson's Great World Exposition, Museum, Aquarium, Animal Conservatory and strictly-moral show on June 19. Advance publicity told of special trains of 200 cars and 15 locomotives. The 200 men and horses included 100 male performers, 20 beautiful ladies, 60 of the smallest horses in the world, 52 cages of wild beasts, 15 sun-bright tents, 40 musicians, six golden chariots and three solid miles of procession.

In addition to the animals listed in the first circus, Robinson offered a giraffe, sea lions, ostrich, polar bear, yak, vulture and one-fifth of a mile of snakes in a crystal den. Seating capacity was 15,000 and prices were the same for two performances. Their half-page ads featured tiny drawings of as many attractions as they could crowd in.

Ten days before the John Robinson show was due, another circus slipped into town, taking advantage of all the publicity and excitement. On June 9, the James Robinson's Champion Circus appeared with 30 equestrian children on ponies and Professor Judson's invention of the age, the flying ship of the air, one of the early dirigibles.

Whether these two Robinsons were related or just rivals in the entertainment business is not known.

The only circus to come to town in July 1873 was P. T. Barnum's Three-Ring Circus with three performances, morning, afternoon

## of clowns, lions reptilian delight

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TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA



None of the advertisements told where the show grounds were located in Terre Haute. This information was obtained from the late George A. Scott as he was nearing his 100th birthday. He attended his first circus at the age of 4 in 1866 when the circus grounds were located on the north side of Wabash Avenue between 6½ and Seventh Streets. He remembered an elephant, a contortionist, horses galloping around the ring and a very daring female bareback rider wearing a short skirt that exposed her bare limbs to public view.

When the McKeen building was built west of this site, it cut down the size of the circus grounds, but Scott recalled the Barnum & Bailey there in 1880.

Next, the show grounds were located between Sixth and 6½ north of Sycamore Street. From there they moved to the area west of Third Street and north of the Big Four Railroad to Locust Street. The grounds extended west to Second Street and even to First Street in some places.

Then the southeast corner of 19th Street and Wabash Avenue was the show grounds before the area was completely enclosed by a board fence and used as a ballpark for many years.

The circus grounds most remembered by readers will be those east of 25th and Wabash. Now that the old-time circuses with their tents, parades and sideshows are only a memory, the more compact traveling circus like the annual Shrine Circus could be contained in the old stadium at Wabash and Brown avenues, or indoors at the Shrine Temple, and now at Hulman Center.

and evening. He advertised 100,000 living, historical and representative curiosities; a sideshow; six famous clowns, including the celebrated Commodore Nutt introduced by Barnum in 1863; and some wild Fiji cannibals.

In August 1873, J. E. Warner's Great Pacific Combination came to town with "five separate shows under four massive pavillions." Three baby lions were allowed to play with the children, but they were not to be allowed to frolic with seven monster Nunidian lions.

The greatest female gymnast of the age, Miss Leona Dare, styled the Comet of 1873, was featured along with graceful Miss Lizzie Keyer; M'llie Emmie Jatan, the Antepodean Queen; Daniel Seal, the famous London clown and court jester; and Herr Paul Schroff, the Lion King. Cane seat chairs were offered in the amphitheater for the comfort of show-goers.

Even though Warner's show was billed as "the last and best show of the season," there was still one more circus to come to town in 1873. This was L. B. Lent's Leviathan Universal Living Exposition. It left its National

Amphitheater and Zoological Gardens, Fourth Avenue, New York City, with 500 men and horses, 500 captive animals and 60 carloads of curiosities to reach Terre Haute on Sept. 5 by double special railroad excursion train to give two shows.

This million dollar New York circus featured a working glass steam engine, Bohemian glass blowers and 30 of the smallest ponies in the world. The parade offered a free view of Sanga and his pythons, along with Lengel in the tiger's den.

Before the days of circus trains, the shows traveled in brightly-colored wagons drawn by horses. One of the greatest treats for small boys was to watch the circus unload and put up the huge tents.

Jerry Mugivan, one of Terre Haute's famous sons, joined up with a small circus here in 1896. He learned the business and soon owned his own show. With a partner he acquired most of the smaller circuses and in 1921 organized the American Circus Corporation to handle all of it. John Ringling took over Mugivan's holdings in 1929.



favorite game

Clarks, Dorothy

# Make-it-yourself marbles made

Ts APR 27 1986

Community Affairs File

Before television, movies and modern transportation, children created and passed on their own forms of entertainment. Games of Tag, Hide-and-Seek, Andy-Over and Ring-Around-Rosie were passed down from one schoolchild to another. The one game that has been passed down that is enjoyed by all boys is marbles.

Backwoods boys had to make their own marbles. They would take a limestone rock and beat off a piece of it. Then they'd cut a little stick out and put it in the hole and keep turning the limestone around, whetting it on the other rocks. They'd get it as round as they wished.

Several pioneer games, such as Yucker, Center and Roley Hole, could be played with marbles. According to one old-timer, "To play Roley Hole, you rounded out three or four holes about five feet apart in a straight row. You would shoot a marble. If you could to the end of the fourth hole without missing, and then come back

## Historically speaking



By Dorothy J. Clark  
*Special to The Tribune-Star*

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without missing, going in every hole with your marble, you was a winner."

Few adults are old enough to remember the game of Marching Around the Levy. "Just a gang of boys and girls get together and take hand in hand, they'd go round and round. They'd select one and tell him to pick him out a sweetheart. Let it be boy or girl.

When the boys and girls guessed the sweetheart's name, the one they'd picked had to go kiss his sweetheart."

Thimble is another game that has almost disappeared. "A bunch of children would stand in a line. Somebody would have the thimble. One would go along the whole row, and put out his or her hand for them to slip the thimble into. Then somebody had to guess who had the thimble."

This writer remembers a childhood game which involved a group of children sitting in rows on somebody's front porch steps. We called it Rock, because the one who was "it" concealed the rock in one or the other of the outstretched hands. If a child guessed correctly which hand the rock was in, that child got to move up one step. The object was to get up and down the steps first to win the game.

A good jump rope was a necessity to take to school in the late 1920s and early 1930s, either an individual one or a longer one for

group jump rope games. Two steady-handed turners were necessary to begin. Then all players, one by one, ran under the turning rope without jumping, next jumping once, and so on without missing. Anyone who missed had to drop out and turn the rope.

There were so many rhymes chanted to the slap of the rope as it hit the concrete that it is hard to remember them.

"Down in the valley where the green grass grows,

"There sets (jumper's name) sweet as a rose.

"Along came (another name) and kissed her on the cheek.

"How many kisses did she get that week?"

(Count until jumper missed, the number of kisses she got.)

☆☆☆

"I like coffee, I like tea.

"I like boys, and boys like me,

"Yes, no, maybe so, certainly."

(The word on which the girl missed told her boy craziness

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quotient supposedly.)

☆☆☆

"Teddy bear, teddy bear, turn around,

"Teddy bear, teddy bear, touch the ground."

(This rhyme continues with the motions, "shine your shoes, read the news, touch the sky, go upstairs, say your prayers. The jumper had to go through the motions.)

Probably the most familiar was "Rich man, poor man, beggar man, thief, doctor, lawyer, Indian chief, and the one she missed on was what her husband was destined to be.

Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush, began with "So early in the morning" and required the children to pretend to wash our clothes, hang our clothes, iron our clothes, put them on and go to church. Surely every child played that game at some time in their life.

Andy-Over required a shed or

barn with room to run around it. A ball was pitched over the barn, and the call "Andy-Over" alerted the kids on the other side to try to catch it, and so on.

Was there ever a likely sidewalk in a neighborhood that didn't have a hopscotch diagram chalked on it between rainstorms? Different rules prevailed in some neighborhoods, but a smooth flat pebble was used that would not roll when tossed. The ability to hop on one foot and keep the balance was a necessity. Hours were spent in this favorite pastime.

Rid Light was a popular game for exciting times. The one who was "it" would call out 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10-Red Light. And the rest of the children would run like mad waiting for the unexpected Red Light to be called anyplace between 1 and 10 when they must freeze and hold that pose. Anyone toppling over or moving was the next "it."



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## in Terre Haute

E6 • TRIBUNE-STAR • Sunday, June 8, 1986

T's JUN 8 1986

## When Axtell ran for the roses

Community Affairs File

## Historically speaking



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In 1897 Bud Doble, a horse trainer and driver of trotters, was interviewed by a London periodical. "Since 1826 the trotting record for the mile has been broken 33 times and I have been responsible for 10 records," he is quoted as saying.

No one else had been credited with more than three records. Flora Temple, first queen of the trotting turf, had a record of 2:19¾, which stood for a long time until Doble beat it with Dexter in 2:17¾.

This stood four years. Then came Goldsmith Maid, who was under Doble's care and queen of the turf for several years.

She trotted 332 heats in 2:30 or under, won 121 races and her net earnings, after expenses, totaled \$246,750. After Goldsmith Maid's time, the record was again lowered by many famous horses, Julien, Maud S. and Sunol. Then came Nancy Hanks, also under Doble's care, who trotted a record mile in 2:04.

After Doble gave up racing, this record was beaten by a quarter of

a second. On Aug. 10, 1894, Nancy Hanks again trotted a mile in 2:04. Alix tied Nancy Hanks the next month. This was the third time 2:04 had been hung up on the Terre Haute track in time never made on any other track.

Axtell was sired by William, full brother of Guy Wilkes, dam by Membrino, and foaled in 1886 in Galesburg, Ill., bred and raised by his owner, C. Williams. Axtell and Drexell were brothers.

A beautiful brown colt, 15½ hands high, he weighed about 1,000 pounds when 3 years old. Described as having the finest head and neck ever seen on a horse, he had an intelligent expression.

Axtell was heavy-boned, strong and a pure and rapid gaited animal. He carried a 5-ounce shoe forward and a 3-ounce behind, the lightest shoe worn by any horse his equal in speed. He trotted more miles at 2:15 and better than any stallion that ever lived.

By 1888 Axtell's sensational performance as a 2-year-old setting a record of 2:23 hitched to a high-wheel sulky gained him a national reputation. The next year he trotted a perfect mile in 2:12 on Terre Haute's four-cornered track, the fastest track in the world, beating his own 3-year-old record, and that of any age stallion record in the world on Oct. 8, 1889.

Four days later Axtell was purchased by an Ijams syndicate for \$105,000: \$55,000 cash and \$50,000 due with interest, a sales price of \$108,000.

Axtell was then kept at Warren Park farm (where Honey Creek Square now is located), which then led all others in the United States, and kept for stud purposes only. The fee in the beginning was \$1,000, but dropped to \$100 in later years.

The first year Axtell earned \$40,000 in stud fees. His name was synonymous with speed and gameness. All natural trotters are said to have dispositions beyond reproach. At the age of 10, Axtell had two trotters in the 2:10 list, and in 1902 was the champion sire of the year. Getting 16 new performers, three of whom took records better than 2:12. Axmann, sired by Axtell, was winner of the Transylvania, \$6,000 at 2:08.

At 19, he was the sire of six in the 2:10 list; 17 in the 2:15; 51 in the 2:20 list; 72 in the 2:25 list; and 106 standard performers.

Joe Duffy, who took care of Axtell for 16 years, told about the style in which Axtell lived out his days, and the great care he received on the

✓ Clark, Dorothy (Horse racing)



Warren-Ijams farm. He spoke of the gentleness of the wonderful stallion.

Axtell died in August 1906, age 19. He was buried on the farm. Duffy helped bury Axtell in a six-foot-deep grave lined with straw and his very best blanket of white trimmed with blue. A white linen sheet was wrapped around his head, his second best blanket covered him, with earth filled in.

Axtell's stall was filled with blankets, decorative as well as making soft padding for the walls. He owned four body-suits or blankets with headpieces which covered him from eyes to tail, two heavy and two lighter, in striped material or plain white trimmed in blue, and plain blue trimmed in white. Each suit had a surcingle, pad or girth to match. He wore one of these when he took a walk on cool mornings and evenings.

Then there were two large square blankets to wear after exercise, for "sweating out," and an extra blanket as a cooler. He also

had a special blanket to wear in t'-stable and two linen sheets to throw over him in warmer weather and fly time.

On pegs hung four bridles, one with blinds to wear on the road before he was settled down by training; one of white leather to wear on parade; and one of russet leather when "le roi a'amuser." A great deal of money was spent on horse toggerly for fine fast horses.

Aluminum sulkies weighed less than 25 pounds. Doble introduced the pneumatic tire for faster and easier riding. The pneumatic sulky also was called a bicycle sulky and had ball-bearing wheels.

Fine oil paintings of Axtell and Nancy Hanks, painted by Marco of Chicago, hung in the office of J. Burch Ijams, son of W. P. Ijams, in the Grand Opera House until it was razed. They were later hung in the Terre Haute House lobby, but were removed for safe-keeping.

More next week about horses and race tracks in Terre Haute.



Clark, Dorothy

# Doble's era

# Horse racing grand affair during

Ts JUL 05 1987

Bud Doble's reputation as a trainer and driver of trotters was world wide. In 1892 he had more than 50 horses in his "string" and a large staff of employees. His business manager also was a veterinarian. There was a bookkeeper, a stenographer, two assistant expert drivers, another driver learning the business, about a dozen grooms, a night watchman, and a horse-shoer and his assistant.

Great care was taken with the shoeing of horses, and they all required different treatment. It was a work of art to shoe them. Peter Neilson, who shod Doble's horses, served an apprenticeship of five years without wages in Denmark to learn this trade. Shoes of record-making horses were treasured souvenirs in later years.

During the campaign or racing season, the grooms, or "rubbers" as they were called, were increased to one for each horse. They were required to sleep in the stables

## Historically speaking



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with the valuable horses, retiring at 10 p.m. and up for breakfast at 6 a.m. Smoking and drinking were not allowed in the stables, and only temperate men were employed.

Each horse's owner was required to furnish blankets, girths, boots, leggings, hobbles, etc., and with harness and sulky if a racer. The charge for training and board was \$3 a day for each horse while in

training, and more during the season, unless the profits were divided between owner and driver.

Doble's reputation was the growth of 35 years, for he was born to the profession. His father was a noted horseman for 60 years. He operated a race track at Mount Holly, N.J., about 1860. As a young boy, Bud began working around the stables, learning the trade, and driving in races and winning.

At the age of 50, he was described as "gentlemanly in appearance, slender, 5 feet 7 inches, with chestnut brown hair and mustache. He looked more like a broker or a lawyer than a driver of race horses." Half of the year he was around his stables or on the track, and most of the other six months was spent in Chicago, where his sister cared for his home and motherless daughter.

He owned interest in many valuable horses, and held one-fifth interest in Axtell, whose earnings

for 1890-92 totaled \$150,000.

In the 1870s a special palace horse car was constructed for the transportation of Bud Doble's famous trotters, Goldsmith Maid and Lucy. It looked like a regular passenger car, with the exception of six extra windows on each side, each with wire screens inside.

It was nicely painted and bore the identification: "Bud Doble's Special Car." This car traveled from Philadelphia to Independence and south to Nashville and intermediate points on the racing circuit.

Entering the 50-foot-long car, the visitor stepped into a small outer apartment, with a luxurious lounge and other furniture. A door led to the main portion of the car, devoted to the horses and their track gear.

There were four stalls, two at either end, and running lengthwise of the car. The sides of the stalls were thickly padded with hair and covered with enameled

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cloth. The rail partitions were movable and could be taken out and placed across the rear end of the stalls, forming a roomy box stall when desired.

Overhead were strapped the dismantled sulkies, all carefully guarded from being scratched or marred. The center of the car was devoted to trunks, chests, hay, etc. At either end of the car was a tank, each holding 80 gallons of water.

Underneath the center of the car was a large box with doors, in which was stored the platform used by the mares when getting in and out of the car. The car was equipped with the most improved trucks adopted by the Pennsylvania Railroad, along with Washington, airbrakes, in fact, everything necessary for the safety and comfort of the queens of the turf and their attendants. The mares traveled to California and back in this special car.

A visitor looking into a trotter's

stall a century ago would be able to tell by the number of beautiful soft blankets hanging on the walls just how fast the horse was. He could guess the record to be about 2:10 and then add a second or two for each blanket less in the display.

During 1889 until 1910, horse racing reached its peak of popularity at the Terre Haute track. Throngs of out-of-towners attended the races. After 1910 the racing spirit in Terre Haute waned, and as no notable racing took place, the one-mile track was removed, and the east side of the half-mile moved over a little to the west. Only bicycle, auto and amateur races were run on it until it was abandoned in 1916.

The mile track had extended on the east side onto W. R. McKeen's land, so when the track was abandoned, he decided to sell his land to H. M. Spang, who laid it out in lots at \$1.000 an acre.



# early local history

## Tracking harness horse racing's

*Clark, Dorothy*  
A distinctly American contribution to the outdoor sport of the world is light harness or trotting horse racing. In the course of history, the trotter has been developed from a small, rather coarse animal with a somewhat awkward gait to a beautiful, smoothly-gaited trotter or pacer.

An increase in size of approximately eight inches improved grace and speed, from slower than a three-minute mile, to less than two minutes for a pacer, and about that for a trotter.

Both are of very ancient lineage. The Elgin Marbles, discovered in the ruins of Athens and the work of sculptors about 430 B.C., show soldiers mounted, some on trotters, some on pacers, and others galloping. These were the horses of over 2,400 years ago.

The gait of the horses of the Roman legions was the pace. The four bronze horses on St. Mark's Cathedral in Venice are pacing. The horses of the knights in armor usually trotted, while those of their esquires ambled or paced.

The Great Seal of England from

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Richard I to Queen Elizabeth shows a knight in full armor mounted on a pacer in action.

New England became a center in developing pacing and trotting horses in America. Before 1650 Rhode Island had become known for its breed of horse called the "Narragansett Pacer," the best horse of its time for elegance and speed.

The first record of any race track in Terre Haute is printed in The Western Register & Terre Haute

Advertiser dated Oct. 12, 1824. It relates the improvement of the breed of horses, and that on the third Friday of October there would be a trial of speed of horses on the Harrison Court near Markle's Mill.

Another early race track was located on Smock's land on the site of the old Fort Harrison (now the Elks Country Club).

The third race track in Vigo County was laid out on the northern outskirts of Terre Haute and used only for working fast horses.

The fourth track was the half-mile course laid out in 1867 on the fair grounds where the Stadium now stands at Wabash and Brown avenues.

From 1870 to the coming of the automobile was the golden age of the harness horse. In 1887 a mile track was built at this same location. This square track with rounded corners became world famous, attracting race fans from all over the country and the world.

Harness racing dates back to the good old days when a gentleman

took his fast horse hitched to a buggy and raced in the afternoon on some deserted road, probably for a side bet to make the race more interesting. Racing on the way to and from church on Sunday was frequently indulged in by those less sensitive to criticism.

Harness horses are either trotters or pacers. A trotter is a diagonally-gaited horse moving with a high-stepping, straight-ahead gait, with left front and right hind leg moving forward in unison. A pacer is a laterally-gaited horse and moves with a swaying motion, swinging the right front and right hind leg forward at the same time.

The America of 1892 was a sports-minded nation. Baseball, a sport unheard of when harness racing began, counted its fans by the hundreds of thousands. An old pastime, "wheeling," had also taken the nation by storm in the Gay Nineties.

Along with the reports of the doings of runners, trotters and pacers, and the baseball teams, the sporting journals were printing news

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about racing performances of the bicycle brigade.

In 1888 the invention of the pneumatic tire and the principle of ball-bearings as applied to wheeled vehicles changed not only the sport of wheeling but harness racing as well. The first bike sulky was used in 1892.

On Aug. 17, 1892, at the annual meeting of the Northwestern Breeders' Association, Budd Doble drove Nancy Hanks out on the Washington Park track at Chicago for the supreme test of her life. She was harnessed to a bike sulky.

Between Nancy Hanks and a world's championship there stood two records — that of Maud S. (2:08  $\frac{3}{4}$ ) and that of Sunc! (2:08  $\frac{1}{4}$ K). The K designated the records made on a kite-shaped track instead of the conventional one.

On a regulation track, trotting in 2:07  $\frac{1}{4}$ , Nancy Hanks broke both records and dethroned two queens. Less than a month later at Terre Haute, Nancy Hanks snuffed out her earlier records by trotting a mile in 2:04 on Sept. 6, 1892.

In addition to the peanuts, hot taffy, and cold drinks, local race fans bought souvenir badges of white satin ribbons showing the names and times of the winners. Veteran printer Henry Housman operated a small printing press carried on an express wagon stationed at the race track in 1894.

Two large banners printed on satin and framed under glass hung in the local museum. These were printed by Moore & Langen and given out compliments of Naylor's Opera House.

Officials of the Terre Haute Trotting Association included W. P. Ijams, president; W. L. Kidder, vice president; R. G. Watson, secretary; G. A. Schaal, treasurer; U. R. Jeffers, superintendent; and directors: John F. Regan, Edwin Ellis, Frank McKeen, W. T. Beauchamp, and W. L. Kidder.

All harness race fans will join with me in hoping this grand old Hoosier and American sport will be enjoyed here in Terre Haute, the former racing capitol of the world with its unique race track.



# Trotting in Terre Haute

## Harness racing history dates back to 1859

✓ *Clark Dorothy*  
The Vigo Agricultural Society, according to William H. Duncan in 1895, introduced trotting in this community about 1858, and early the next year, that organization was looking for a piece of land suitable for a fair ground that they could afford.

They selected the old Conover place, north of the city, on which a half-mile track was constructed, and on which, doubtless, many trials of speed were held, though the records of the society were silent on that point.

The first reference to racing was found in the minutes of a meeting conducted June 25, 1859, when John C. Kester, M. Vanscoyde, N. T. Wells, C. Y. Patterson and B. Effitt were appointed on a committee "to get up a track at the least possible expense." The committee obviously fulfilled its mission as the track was in working order soon after.

Officers of the society included F. Markle, president; T. P. Murray, vice president; E. B. Allen, secretary; Henry Fairbanks, treasurer; and the executive committee composed of G. W. Bement, Fielding Shepherd, S. Wolf, Corey Barbour, Blackford Moffatt, R. L. Thompson and Milton Rogers.

The grounds north of the city were rented from the owner, John Brake, and following the fair of 1860, the record is a blank until July 28, 1866, when a call was published in the newspaper, the people met, and again organized the Vigo Agricultural Society. Many organizations lapsed during the Civil War years.

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A fair was conducted in 1866, and among the winners in the speed ring were John Rector, C. Fairbanks, Joseph Kern and T. C. Swan.

Jan. 12, 1867, the board of directors met and Harvey D. Scott offered a resolution requesting the Board of County Commissioners "to purchase for the use of the Vigo County Agricultural Fair, grounds near the city," which was subsequently done, the commissioners buying the land about where the stadium now is located.

In March, the directors of the fair petitioned the State Board of Agriculture to hold the state fair here that year (1867), and in consideration of a liberal subscription, the petition was granted. A composite picture of some scenes from the state fair in Terre Haute can be seen at the Historical Museum of the Wabash Valley.

About this time, the necessity for a good track was becoming apparent, and the contract for con-

structing a half-mile course was awarded to Harve McMurtrie, who reported pulling 16 stumps during the first day's work.

June 17, the track was declared completed and was ordered thrown open to the public. It was over this track that the state fair races were held. In August, Joseph Gilbert conceived the idea of a mile track for Terre Haute, and it was on his motion that the matter was given a start. John Bell took his subscription paper around, and the citizens did the rest.

The track was surveyed by Demorest & Simpson, and having secured a lease of sufficient ground, and \$767 in subscription, the work was begun. Sept. 16, the committee reported that work complete.

Later the Agriculture Board issued a statement: "The mile track was undertaken as a private enterprise, but has somehow or other got mixed up with the general affairs of the society. It is a valuable improvement, to be sure, and one which would have to be made some time, but might have been postponed until another year without any great inconvenience. Now that it is done and behind in its finances, the question is — what is best to do with the debt incurred for its completion?" He believed those who undertake a project should collect funds to pay for it.

The mile track was paid for in some way, and continued in use until 1877 when it was abandoned. Racing was continued on the half-mile track, and at each fair small purses were offered.

In 1883 a new element appeared in racing circles in Terre Haute, taking the name of the Terre Haute Trotting Association. Organized on Jan. 16, it elected the following: W. T. Beauchamp, president; John G. Shryer, vice president; Frank McKeen, treasurer; Robert G. Watson, secretary; and Jacob White, superintendent.

The fair grounds were leased by the new association, and a meeting in June offered \$3,000 in purses. The next year purses increased to \$6,000, and after that increased until \$50,000. For a number of years, W. P. Ijams managed the association. He also was president of the National Trotting Association.

The local track, the best and fastest in the world, was constructed in 1886. It was surveyed by George R. Grimes, and Col. U. R. Jeffers kept it in excellent condition.

Among the world's records held by our famous four-cornered track were Axtell's trotting record of 2:12 on Oct. 11, 1889; Nelson's 2:11½ the next year; and Nancy Hank's 2:04 in 1892. Mascot's pacing record of 2:04 was set here in 1892.

Whirligig, Alix, Carbonate, Robert J., and Fantasy broke records here in 1894. Also, John R. Gentry, Alix, Directly, and Carbonate again.

The race meeting of 1894 was a memorable one in trotting circles everywhere. The stakes and purses totaled \$92,000, and the leading horses and horsemen of the world were here.

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Community Affairs File

Community Public Library



# That's entertainment

## In 1850, restless folks were looking for amusements

Is Oct 22 1989 *Clark, Dorothy*  
In more ways than one, 1850 was the end of one period and the beginning of another. In Terre Haute, the people were restless and seeking amusements.

In 1849, a Mr. Jackson gave a series of entertainments at the courthouse consisting of imitations of prominent actors and orators, both political and ecclesiastic.

A new organization here in 1850 was the Atalantian Litterate. They had a well-furnished club room and library, and during the winter months they offered a course of lectures.

In the town hall there was an exhibition of an oxyhydrogen microscope and a vocal concert by the Higgins family for two nights. "It would be good," said the newspaper reporter, "to have a conscience as clear as Mrs. Higgins' voice."

A crowd pleaser was the panoramic exhibition of the Hudson River and scenes from Virginia. Its 9,400 yards of canvas was "pronounced by artists and critics to be the best work of art ever presented to the public."

This was a time when local people were interested in phrenology. Anton gave lectures on the subject "for a small fee." He also gave charts and examined heads at Brown's Hotel (on the square), presumably for a larger fee.

Of four entertainments given here about the same time, the lectures on phrenology, a lecture on phonetics, the exhibition of paint-

### Historically speaking



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By Dorothy J. Clark  
Special to The Tribune-Star

ings, and a company of minstrels, the phrenology lectures were pronounced the most interesting.

A number of concerts were presented in town, but the "Grand Concert" given by Okah Tubbee, an Indian, was unique. Heralded as "the greatest natural musician in the world," Tubbee put up at the Prairie House and charged 25 cents for his performance.

The newspaper reported he "goes it strong on natural principles and plays exquisitely on several instruments." Nor was this all. He also sold "real Indian medicine" which was promised to cure some two dozen major ailments of mankind, "from bronchitis to cancer, and from white swelling and toothache to fits."

Though he threatened to stay but a few days, his advertisement appeared for several months in the Wabash Courier. The desire of the people to be humbugged was

further satisfied by the circus, barbecue, camp meeting, and patent medicine peddlers.

Each year there were two or three circuses in Terre Haute. Judging from their names, they must have surpassed each other and everything else. For example, one was called "Mabel's Grand Olympic Arena and United States Circus."

As for political meetings, one was held at Fort Harrison, a short distance north of town, during the Taylor campaign of 1848. A crowd estimated at 15,000 to 30,000 people were all fed on grounds.

Three speakers addressed the huge crowd simultaneously, to give them all a chance to hear. General Taylor himself, who had been in command during the Battle of Fort Harrison in 1812, had been invited to attend, but had sent his regrets.

Eating and listening to speeches was popular entertainment 140 years ago. Fourth of July celebrations usually began as early as 7 a.m. with processions of school children, then a meeting with songs, the reading of the Declaration of Independence, an oration and prayer. This was followed by a dinner spread on the courthouse yard, followed by a second meeting with more speeches.

On one occasion, when the celebration was held in Early's Grove north of town, the schedule was enlarged to include speeches all afternoon followed by a second collation supper, and still more

speeches until almost dark.

The temperance laws had almost succeeded (temporarily) in making Terre Haute a place where "liquor as a beverage is almost unknown." It might have gone hard with the citizens if they had not had substitutes in amazing abundance and variety.

One readily available alcoholic beverage was the patent medicine, the only big advertisers in 1850. Their name was liquor, they could cure anything, and they spoke with authority.

In the winter of 1850-51 there was a new entertainment beginning to supersede the old-fashioned parties. It was called "happening-in." One such party was held at the home of Judge S.B. Gookins on Strawberry Hill. This was so far out of town at the time, the Judge was obliged to resign his seat on the city council.

The party was for the Sunday School children of Mr. Jewett's church, together with a number of "more adult folks." Strawberries, ice cream and cake were followed by a promenade on the lawn with music.

The naughtiness came a little later, and, as the paper hints, surreptitiously, "in the absence of Mrs. Gookins, and after the stars arose, there may have been a little of the light fantastic toe on the grass. But all was retired and quiet by early bed-time."

Yes, 1850 was a turning point in more ways than one in old Terre Haute.



# Bits and pieces from the past

## It seems there was always something crazy going on

T 3 APR 29 1990

Clark, Dorothy

The unusual, the amusing, the hilarious — all are of interest to a county historian. The readers of this column evidently enjoy them also. They keep sending them in, and we're ever so grateful.

Some time around 1925, a local doctor was preparing himself (and the patient) for an emergency appendectomy at St. Anthony's Hospital, formerly located at Sixth and College streets.

The patient was the "Fat Lady" in Barnum & Bailey's Circus which was touring Indiana. The billboard said she weighed 672 pounds.

The area had been painted with iodine and scrubbed with alcohol and ether. More ether was being applied, drop by drop, into the nose cone. Nurses and attending surgeons were "flying blind," so to speak. They had no experience with surgery on a patient of this magnitude.

As the "Fat Lady" began to relax, the nervous assisting doctor yelled out, "Look out, Doctor, she's falling off the table over here." He received the answer, "Don't worry, Doctor, she's falling off over on this side, too."

The patient survived with very little loss of weight. The unknown surgeon survived also. The assistant in this unusual surgery was Dr. Thomas C. Stunkard. Sister Serephena and Sister Phillopera were the two nurses helping with the operation, along with Sister Ida, the Mother Superior.

One Saturday afternoon in June, local photographer Willard Martin sent out a call to all mothers with kiddies under the age of 5 to meet him at Collett Park.

### Historically speaking



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Martin's experience had been with still photographs, and he decided to make his first silent moving picture. This was in 1916. Crowds of young mothers showed up with their babies dressed in long white dresses.

Martin had all the little toddlers join hands in a big circle. Seated on a chair in the middle of the circle, he held two babies on his lap, one 13-weeks old, the other 4 days older, and cousins.

The circle went around and around while one baby smiled and the other cried. An impatient woman in the crowd yelled, "Take it with her squalling, It's more natural anyhow!"

Martin took her advice, and yelled "Let her roll!" to his assistant, and Terre Haute's contribution to early silent movies was filmed. The movie was entitled "Martin and His Twins."

The mothers were invited to view the film at the Crescent Theater and see their children in the movies. Downen reported, "Sure

enough, there was Lois' mouth wide open crying." The Crescent was located where Betty's Restaurant is located at 679 Wabash Ave.

The tiny actresses involved in this very first moving picture made in Terre Haute were Lois Moore, who became Mrs. Rogers, and her younger cousin, Mary Emma Downen, who became Mrs. Caserot-ti.

Speaking of entertainment, a reader's grandmother, born in 1865, used to talk about the music of her generation. She mentioned songs learned at singing conventions were "The Spanish Cavalier" and "Jack Was A Sailor." These were the hottest numbers in the 1880s.

Buffalo Bill played Terre Haute in 1886 at the old Vigo Fairgrounds. In those days his theatrical company featured real cowboys and Indians, not the Hollywood imitations of later years. Some of these Indians had fought with Sitting Bull.

Buffalo Bill appeared in Terre Haute as late as 1908, but his popularity was not as great. The huge circus parades were offering more than Wild West entertainment.

One of the most famous circus parades featured the "Two Hemispheres" bandwagons, the largest ever built and pulled by 40 matched horses. The bandwagons cost Barnum & Bailey \$40,000.

Jake Posey of Cedar Lake drove this team more than 10,000 miles on the streets of both continents without a wreck.

Terre Haute furnished every type of entertainment available for the people of the city, county and entire Wabash Valley area. In its day, people would flock to town to see the street fairs, the white horse which was trained to jump off a high platform on the courthouse lawn into a container of water, and every type of horse race, from buggies to harness and fast pacers, from week-long race meetings, bicycle races, parades of every kind from horse-drawn vehicles covered with fresh flowers to political torch-light parades.

People flocked to see the medicine men perform on street corners, to hear speeches, to hear the early bands and traveling shows, to attend picnics and barbecues in shady groves, and to eat in all the fine restaurants by gaslight, or Sunday dinners at the old Filbeck Hotel and enjoy the string quartets and a chance to ogle the traveling actors and actresses staying there between performances.

Window shopping downtown was a treat for the visiting country people in town to do their trading. Stark drama was enjoyed at the court trials, even as today. People from all outlying areas still come to Terre Haute regularly to eat in our restaurants, to bowl, to play miniature golf, to shop in our malls, to attend movies and other theatrical performances, to hear good music and to enjoy the art galleries and other cultural activities. Look around. You can always find something to do besides cruising Wabash Avenue.

Vigo County Public Library

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# When the Cubs came to town

## 'Three-finger' Brown's outing thrilled home folks

10 OCT 21 1980

The biggest game of baseball ever played in western Indiana happened 82 years ago, on Oct. 24, 1908, right here in Terre Haute.

Wild-eyed enthusiasm was rampant in town when the Chicago Cubs and the Detroit Tigers arrived.

One of the largest crowds in the young history of baseball was in attendance at the game to see Mordecai "Three-Finger" Brown, formerly from Terre Haute, pitch six innings.

He received a great welcome. Before the game, Mayor James Lyons presented Brown with a chest of silver, the gift of his many friends. Needless to say, the Cubs upheld their supremacy by handing the Tigers a 7-1 drubbing, and the fans were delighted.

Mordecai Peter Centennial Brown was born near Terre Haute in Nyesville, northeast of Rockville, on Oct. 19, 1876. He had as many names as fingers on his pitching hand. As a youngster, he suffered an accident which cost him the loss of half his index finger. He developed so many unorthodox pitches, however, he was acclaimed as one of baseball's foremost pitchers.

"Three-Finger" first appeared in the Nall League as a St. Louis Cardinal in 1903. After his rather mediocre beginning, St. Louis decided Mordecai's handicap was too much to overcome, and dealt him to the Cubs.

Under the guidance of Frank Selee, Brown was soon rivaling the Giant's immortal Christy Mathewson as the league's top-drawer hurler. In the next nine seasons with Chicago, he enabled

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the northsiders to win four pennants.

From 1906 to 1911, Mordecai turned in more than 20 victories a season, reaching his high-water mark of 29 in 1908, and an impressive total of 148 victories in six seasons.

During the hectic 1908 season, climaxed by an unprecedented playoff, Brown strung together four consecutive shutouts from June 13 through July 4, the first pitcher in his league to establish such a mark.

Mordecai moved on to Cincinnati in 1913 before jumping to the Federal League in 1914 as St. Louis manager. After one more season with the Feds, Brown returned to his beloved Cubs for his 14th and last big-league season.

Of all the 480 games Brown appeared in, it is doubtful if he ever forgot the historic playoff battle with the Giants at New York's Polo Grounds on Oct. 8, 1908. Relieving Jack Pfeister in the first inning, Mordecai went on to beat Matty 4-2, nothing unusual since Brown

was always Matty's chief nemesis when these two giants of the mound hooked up.

Charles Nehf, who knew baseball from its start, remembered 13 players from Terre Haute who went to the majors. They were Cod Myers, Art Nehf, Cecil Ferguson, Brown, Billy Nelson, Ace Stewart, Victor Aldridge and Dizzy Trout.

Volunteer fire companies in Terre Haute were responsible for the first organized baseball here. The most outstanding of these conflicts between rival teams occurred Aug. 13, 1867, when the Mohawks lost to the Eurekas 61-83.

Lovers of no-hit, no-run games need an explanation. The ball was pitched underhand, and the batter took his time until he saw some prospect of a hit. Only actual strikes were counted, and only the umpire kept track of strikes or balls. The batter was entitled to four attempts to hit the ball, and if he missed the fourth attempt he was out.

The rules changed a little later allowing the out only if the catcher caught the ball on the fourth strike. The catcher stood well back from the plate and caught the ball on the bounce. Only after three strikes did he move up from the plate.

If he caught the ball missed by the batter, the batter was out. If he did not catch the ball, he usually made first base before the catcher could get the ball and deliver it to the first baseman. If there was no backstop, only one base was permitted because the ball might be lost and there would be time to circle the bases.

Those early games were played on North Sixth Street in an open field between Sycamore Street and the Vandalia Railroad. Teams also played on vacant lots on the northside of Wabash west of Seventh Street.

Not until the 1890s was a baseball park complete with grandstand built near 17th and Wabash. Before this time, admission was never charged, not even the passing of the hat among the spectators.

Sunday games were played on an open field east of Ninth Street, beginning a half block north of Locust Street, and bounded on the east by the I. & St. L., later the Big Four Railroad, and on the north by Fourth Avenue. At times there would be three games going on at the same time.

Among the teams which played there were the Awkwards and the Blues, the Fast's and the Slow's. These teams took over when the volunteer firemen quit playing and the paid fire departments came into being. Nehf managed the Slow's, and Albert Froeb was the manager or captain of the Fast's. The Slow's won four years out of four years.

Terre Haute's sporting circles brought about some competition with other cities and the organization of league teams. Outlasting all others was the famous Three-I League of Indiana, Illinois and Iowa, which finally disbanded July 4, 1956.

Terre Haute furnished at least one professional umpire, Benny Van Borssum, who became nationally known.

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TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

Community Affairs File

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# Music in old Terre Haute

## Local musicians formed Ringgold Orchestra in 1876

Ts JUN 10 1990

Clark, Dorothy

While visiting the Centennial Exposition at Philadelphia in the summer of 1876, local musician George A. Sickford enjoyed the band concerts and conceived the idea to organize a band in Terre Haute patterned after the Ringgold Band.

When he returned home, he called on Jacob Breinig, former bandmaster of a regimental band during the Civil War, and persuaded him to help organize a band and orchestra.

On Dec. 13, 1876, the new Ringgold Orchestra performed for the first time at Naylor's Opera House, northeast corner of Fourth and Main streets. Ren Early, scenery man at the Opera House on that occasion, joined the band as drum major in 1880.

Members of the first local Ringgold Band were Sickford, Breinig, William Sickford, Henry L. Breinig, A.W. Werneke, Jerome Hill, George Weldele, Frank Carpenter, John Allison, H.W. Harrison, Frank Breinig, Peter Breinig, James F. Border, Herman Henshing, William Hartman, W. Tuttle and William Hoff.

When some members dropped out, others joined, so membership was kept up. In 1879 the band was incorporated as the "Light Guard Ringgold Band."

In 1886, Sickford moved from the city, and Jacob Breinig became the sole manager of the band until his death, when his brother, Peter J. Breinig, took charge. After a few years, the band was discontinued.

### Historically speaking



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Born in Germany in 1832, Jacob Breinig came to America when he was 20 years old. He lived for a brief time in New Orleans, then Evansville, Vincennes, Pittsburgh for a few years, returning to Vincennes until he moved to Terre Haute where he spent the rest of his life. He had belonged to the regimental bands of the 24th and 91st Indiana Volunteers during the Civil War.

Professor Breinig was a leader in state band tournaments staged throughout Indiana and eastern Illinois in the days when there were really good bands still in existence.

Breinig composed a number of marches and melodies. His march to the melody of "Heart Bowed Down" from "Bohemian Girl" was played at his funeral. All his band-leader friends performed his favorites on that sad occasion.

Breinig also arranged the music for Indiana's state song, "On The

Banks of the Wabash," at the request of Paul Dresser, its composer.

The Naylor Opera House where the Ringgold Band presented its first performance was opened in 1870. It was built by a group of business men to maintain the prosperity of the west end of Wabash Avenue. Its opulence and popularity were enjoyed by Terre Hauteans until it was destroyed by fire on July 21, 1896.

Its replacement, the Grand Opera House, was built on the southeast corner of Seventh and Cherry streets. It was completed and opened in November 1897, and now it too is gone.

The Ringgold Band played at all important affairs. On the day of the public dedication of the new courthouse, June 7, 1888, crowds began pouring into the corridors and filling the rooms all over the building. Crowds of strangers swarmed into the building at every entrance.

Shortly before 10 a.m., the Ringgold Band, stationed in the center of the lower corridor, and the Military Band, at the south center of the long corridor on the second floor, played to entertain the visitors.

Ceremonies began in the Superior Court Room when Judge Allen introduced Col. Richard W. Thompson as the first speaker. Other speakers were Murray Briggs, Dr. Barnabus Hobbs of Bloomingdale, and Judge Long.

The Ringgold Band continued to

play at appropriate intervals while the crowds inspected the hallways and all parts of the new building. The celebration drew to a close after dark when a beautiful pyrotechnic display was shown from the roof of the building.

Those who cared to drill and wear uniforms joined the four military organizations in Terre Haute in 1884. Those who cared to sing or play musical instruments joined the five musical societies. The Apollo Band and Orchestra, managed by Toure and McKennan, had offices at 322 Ohio St.

The Oratorio Society, organized in 1877, met every Monday night at the Normal School building. W.W. Byers was president, and Anton Snide was the musical director.

The Caecilia Singing Society met every Monday and Thursday evening at the southwest corner of Fifth and Main streets. William M. Statz was president, Professor William Zobel, musical director.

The Ringgold Band met at Dowling Hall, with J. Breinig as president and leader.

The Terre Haute Maennerchor met at Turner Hall on Ninth Street, between Main and Ohio streets, every Tuesday and Friday evening. Otto Wittenberg was president; C. Bretting, secretary; and C.J. Kantman, director.

Local citizens seem to be content with electronic music instead of live music these days. They can still enjoy public school and college bands in the area, along with the Terre Haute Symphony.

Community Affairs File

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# Pioneers made time for recreation

## Work, play, whiskey important to everyday life

We hear a lot about recreation these days, but would it surprise you to learn that probably more time was devoted to it in pioneer days?

With all the earnestness of that time, inside the log cabin there was seldom free time to waste. The women united play with much of their work when possible.

After deer skins could be dispensed with for bed covers, quilting brought the women of the neighborhood together during the day, with the men joining them in the evening.

Sugar making was another occasion when work and play went hand in hand. Sometimes several families would join together and camp through the season where the largest number of the best sugar maple trees could be found.

The men tapped the trees and gathered the sap, while the women cared for the kettles and the camp duties.

There always was time in the evening for a gathering of young people. Dancing was the great indoor amusement, and a walk of several miles after a hard day's work added zest to the entertainment.

Talented fiddlers were in constant demand for miles around. To save their moccasins or precious shoes, boys and girls danced barefooted. The floors were rough, full of splinters, and the dancing frequently was interrupted to remove a troublesome splinter.

### Historically speaking



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By Dorothy J. Clark  
*Special to The Tribune-Star*

In spite of the rough puncheon floors and no better refreshments than whiskey sweetened with maple sugar, there was probably no happier company than those who danced the "scamper-down, double-shuffle, western-swing and half moon." These were dances of 155 years ago.

Another diversion of early times was the shooting match for beef, turkeys, whiskey and sometimes money wagers. When a beef was shot for, it was divided into five quarters, the hide and tallow being the fifth, and considered the best of all.

Society was rude and rough and whiskey drinking was the custom. A settlement was no sooner formed than the steam of the still perfumed the air.

The settlers endured privations and hunger, and their children cried for bread for want of mills. For want of schools and churches they remained ignorant, and the

whiskey still was there, and here the farmer exchanged his bag of corn for the beverage of the frontier border.

In every family the jug of bitters was kept handy, especially during the chill season. The visit of a neighbor was excuse enough to produce the bottle or demijohn. At all rustic gatherings, liquor was considered an indispensable article, and was freely used. Everyone imbibed, preachers and all.

The free use of whiskey was stimulated by a peculiar combination of circumstances. Corn sold for 8 cents a bushel and had to be delivered at one of the river towns to get that price. It was of no value in exchange for goods at the stores.

Whiskey, on the other hand, was always available, either at the stores in barter or for shipment down river, and this at 18 cents to 30 cents a gallon was a better investment than the corn.

This stimulated the construction of stills in various parts of the Wabash country, and large quantities of this liquor were manufactured. Farmers carried their corn to the still and brought back their whiskey.

Pioneer outdoor sports included the usual hunting, shooting and athletic matches, and the river towns developed a passion for horse racing and gambling. Undoubtedly, the Wabash River traffic brought many Mississippi River gamblers into the small towns

along its banks.

Newcomers who came to share the responsibilities of the community were taken at once into the charmed circle of frontier hospitality.

Logging and cabin raisings brought the men together from miles around. Quilting, cotton-picking, corn-husking, spinning and apple paring brought together the young and old of both sexes. These occasions often closed with a supper and a dance when the men came in.

Card playing was enjoyed by both sexes, and an evening call was hardly complete in some settlements without a few games of euchre or whist.

When the ground was frozen, wolves were hunted on horseback and counted a rare sport. Organized hunts were frequent, when relative values were put upon different kinds of game, and the defeated party paid for the whiskey.

A keg of liquor would be provided, and a day or two after the hunt, both parties would gather at some point where they would shoot at a mark, or compete in a few bouts of fisticuffs.

The pioneer family took their diversions and recreation time as seriously as the modern family, and in spite of all our so-called advantages, it's debatable which family had the most fun.



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## Valley heritage

# Resident remembered circus

(21) \* Clark, Dorothy & A History (cont)

S.D. Gookins, a long-time resident of Terre Haute but living at Chicago in 1923, wrote down some of his memories of this city and its people. I wish more people would do that for the benefit of future generations.

"I used to think of the Hulman house on Ohio Street as being a wonderful place in its prime. On beautiful summer mornings it was always my ambition to go wading in the fountain pool in the front yard.

"Also, I remember very well when the property directly across the street from the Terre Haute House, the northwest corner of Seventh and Main, was vacant and the place where the circus always put up their tents.

"We once lived in a house on Ohio Street owned by Dr. Link and next door to Dr. Roberts. Donn Roberts and I used to make circus band-wagons of old starch boxes and tin-foil and broken looking-glass and we had circus tent some 20 feet in diameter made of everything from carpet and oil-cloth and cheese-cloth.

"I remember the old Terre Haute of 1877 and 1880 pretty well when at the Fall Carnivals they had tight-rope walking across Main Street near the old Opera House.

"Also a tea and coffee store on Main Street which had a three-foot tea pot which spouted live



### Historically Speaking

By Dorothy Clark  
Special to the Tribune-Star

steam hung over the front entrance.

"I have seen watermelons sell from the farmer's wagons in front of the Market House for five cents a piece, and even two for a nickel. I have seen my Grandfather Donnelly buy fine tomatoes from the farmers for eleven cents a bushel.

"I remember very well Scudgers on Main Street which was the big candy store, and considered the place to get oysters fresh from the East as they used to be packed in tin cans which one seldom see now.

"Many a summer morning about 5 a.m., I have chased down Ohio Street with a hand full of salt trying to put it on some sparrow's tail, as I understood that was the correct way to catch sparrows.

"My memory of frequent arrivals in Terre Haute from Chicago and elsewhere is fresh

with the sounds of the tom tom, the pounding of the big black tin waiter tray by an equally black African waiter at the doorway of the dining room in the old Depot upon the arrival of trains.

"I have in mind a sight which all Terre Haute turned out to see one Sunday afternoon years ago. A train nearly a mile long of freight cars of the days of 1875, the small 25-foot box-cars painted green, white, blue or red, each car loaded with Texas cattle on the way north.

"Also quite as odorous, but not so voluminous as the cattle, a whale, a dead one, loaded on a flat car and sheltered by a tent and on exhibition on East Main Street at ten cents per look, east of the old Terre Haute House.

"Summer nights of years ago filled Main Street in campaign times with the now extinct torch light parade with the red, white and blue oil-cloth capes and the miner's lamps in the caps and the flaming dripping torches.

"In the hot August days, I remember the train loads of the boys in the regiments going out to fight a sham battle at the Fairgrounds west of the city. The distance was not far, but it seemed then as far as New York.

"Also I remember another great day when Terre Haute virtually closed up and the whole town went to the great funeral of a prominent son, a Colonel

Edsel.

"The old Terre Haute Opera House had a green baize drop curtain and a painted drop behind that. In front of the gas foot-lights were green tin reflector shields. The genuine old-fashioned minstrels used to hold forth there about twice a year. The lead ... a red bandana handkerchief about his neck, a blue cambric shirt and slap stick soles on his comedy shoes about 18 inches long, would always sing 'Way Down Upon the Swan-eeee Ribber.' Other songs were 'Whoa, Emma,' and 'Shoo Fly Don't Bother Me.'

"Somewhere west of the Opera House was the 99-cent store where I bought a wooden locomotive and other toys.

"A photographer had a tin-type gallery on Main Street east of the old Terre Haute House. It was in a little car on wheels. I still have the tin-type of my two-year-old sister with her red plaid dress and the strings of her little red bonnet all chewed wet when Uncle Metz Donnelly picked her up and took her over for a sitting. Mother said she always looked like the child of an Irish washer woman and her name might as well have been Kelly or Muldoon as Gookins."

Gookins closed his recollections by remarking that he had reached the bottom of another page and would close.